
Thursday, 28 June 2007

GM CROPS MANAGEMENT ACT REVIEW

A review of the *Genetically Modified Crops Management Act 2004* has started.

Submissions to the review would be independently assessed with a report prepared for the Genetically Modified (GM) Crop Advisory Committee which will make recommendations to the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Rory McEwen.

Mr McEwen said the review would focus on:

- The purpose of the Act and whether there are alternative ways to prevent adverse market outcomes
- The operation of the Act
- The regulation that prohibits the cultivation of GM crops in South Australia.

“The Act gives effect to the South Australian Government’s commitment to ensure that the cultivation of genetically modified (GM) crops is regulated in South Australia,” he said.

“It has the primary purpose of permitting the **regulation** of GM food crops in order to prevent adverse market outcomes that may otherwise occur from the **unregulated** introduction of GM food crops into the State’s agricultural production systems.”

A requirement of the Act is that it be reviewed by the fourth anniversary of its commencement (ie by 29 April 2008).

GM food crops cannot be cultivated anywhere in South Australia, by virtue of the *Genetically Modified Crops Management (Designation of Areas) Regulations 2004*. These regulations expire on 29 April 2008.

An Invitation to Comment and an Information Paper can be downloaded at www.pir.sa.gov.au/gmc
Copies are also available from the Executive Officer of the GM Crop Advisory Committee - telephone 08 8207 2361 or email gmcropsactreview@saugov.sa.gov.au.

The health and environmental impacts of a genetically modified organism are assessed by the Federal Office of the Gene Technology Regulator and is not included in the review.

Community meetings will be held in Adelaide, Cummins, Kadina, Keith and Parndana during July 2007 and these will be widely promoted once the details are finalised.

Mr McEwen said that it was important that stakeholders made the time to comment to the GM Crop Advisory Committee.

“Several years ago, community groups on Kangaroo Island and Eyre Peninsula were keen to establish GM crop free areas for marketing purposes,” he said. “It would be good to know whether they are still keen to pursue this option or not, or whether new issues have arisen.”

Submissions must be lodged by Friday, 3 August 2007.