



Organic Growers Association of Western Australia, Inc.

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25th January, 2010

Mr Terry Redman
Minister for Agriculture and Food
Email: terry.redman@mp.wa.gov.au

Dear Minister

The Organic Growers Association of WA is extremely disappointed with your announcement to allow commercial growing of Genetically Modified (GM) canola as an exemption to the current Act.

We have emphasized to you on numerous occasions of the difficulties in achieving and maintaining organic accreditation should GM crops be allowed. We have also repeatedly advised you that we will find it difficult to source GM free produce to maintain our certification as the current organic standards do NOT allow for any GM in the production of our organic food/crops.

Despite your assurance that GM and organic can co-exist (as in other countries) their standards are different to ours. Our members and farmers will find it more difficult to continue in organic farming. You have neglected to protect our organic industry by ignoring our concerns and calls for you to take steps to prevent our farmers from potential loss of livelihood and subsequent income.

Canola will eventually cross pollinate with related brassica family members and as such, even our members growing certified organic broccoli are concerned about the potential loss of their markets.

We may eventually see a decline in the organic sector as a result of increasing costs from sourcing GM free produce, and these are then passed onto our customers who are consciously avoiding GM ingredients in their daily diet.

Our farmers will now have no other choice but to seek legal advice and possible legal action if they face a loss of income following suspension from our certifying bodies from contamination of GM canola.

We are extremely disappointed that as Minister for Agriculture and Food, you have disregarded an increasingly lucrative sector of agriculture in WA in favour of biotechnology. We are also disappointed that we have not been included into this decision making process.

We ask that you respond to this letter and our request to protect our industry by ensuring there is some transparency as to the locations of GM growers, so our members can at least take necessary steps to protect their farms and certification.

Yours sincerely,

Leesa Caldwell
President
OGAWA