



Grain
Producers SA

MEDIA RELEASE

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GM moratorium disadvantages SA grain growers

GRAIN Producers SA says the newly-extended moratorium on genetically modified crops denies growers freedom of choice and is a distraction from addressing key issues that are holding back productivity of the State's \$2.5 billion grain industry.

GPSA chief executive Darren Arney says the organisation believes SA grain growers must have the same level of choice as other mainland states regarding whether or not they grow GM crops.

"GPSA's policy on GM crops is different to the views of the State Government and the Opposition," he said. "We want South Australian grain growers to have the freedom to choose to grow whatever crops will deliver the best return for their business, improving their profitability.

"It should be an on-farm decision made by growers, not a decision made for them as part of the political process.

"We do not believe the quoted \$50 a tonne premiums for GM-free canola are available in the general marketplace. Growth markets like China are actually discounting its imports of South Australian canola because of blackleg disease so GPSA is unsure how so-called premiums are being measured.

"A proportion of SA's canola is exported for biofuel production so there is a great opportunity to promote a renewable industry in our own state which could require higher tonnages of canola which, because it is not for consumption, could easily be GM."

Mr Arney said a survey of GPSA members last year found the more pressing issues that needed urgent attention to improve profitability were increasing competition in the grains industry and wider access to the ports system for grain exports.

"While the State Government and Opposition are revisiting their GM policies, South Australian growers really need to see action on the outcomes of the South Australian Parliamentary Select Committee into Grain Handling," he said.

"The committee – which included Members of Parliament from both major parties – started its work nearly three years ago and since then, there has been little action on its recommendations.

"The committee wrote a number of applications on port ownership to the Federal Government on the takeover of Viterra by Glencore and there has been no response or follow-up action.

"The longer action is delayed, the more costly these issues are for growers," he said.

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About Grain Producers SA:

Grain Producers SA is a not-for-profit organisation that intends to represent all levy-paying grain producers in South Australia. GPSA's objective is to foster the development and implementation of policies that promote the economic and environmental sustainability of the South Australian grains industry for the benefit of its producers and the wider community. Growers are encouraged to have their say on policy and have input on the people who represent them.

