

Monday, September 28, 2015

## GPSA launches GM variety selection petition

GRAIN Producers SA is starting a petition to enable producers to support lifting the moratorium on growing genetically modified crops in South Australia.

The petition – the first under the new advocacy structure in South Australia – will be launched by GPSA at its Grower Day at the Yorke Peninsula Field Days tomorrow.

GPSA chief executive officer Darren Arney says the petition highlights producers' need for freedom of choice on variety selection.

"Our members are becoming increasingly frustrated that they do not have the same freedom of choice in their farming systems that their interstate counterparts have," he said. "GPSA's policy is that growers should have the freedom of choice to grow the cereal, legume and oilseed varieties that best fit their farming system. This means having access to genetically modified crops.

"South Australian grain producers have a long history of innovation and adopting new technology to improve productivity.

"With an estimated export value this year of \$2.4 billion, the grains industry is a major contributor to South Australia's economy," he said. "However, in recent years, our capacity to increase productivity has slowed. As a result, we need to ensure we have access to all the latest technology to ensure our industry's continued profitability and sustainability.

"Producers can drop into our site at 609 Arthurlton Road at the field days or attend the Grower Day on Tuesday or Annual General Meeting on Wednesday to sign the petition. Copies will also be available on the GPSA website which can be posted or faxed to GPSA."

GPSA will collate the petition – which is a letter addressed to Minister for Agriculture Leon Bignell asking him to lift the moratorium – and forward it to the State Government.

GPSA believes the benefits to a farming system of using GM crops include:

- Increased weed control options and reduced reliance on chemicals for weed control.
- Increased crop rotation options.
- Increased production per hectare.
- Increased competitiveness nationally and globally.
- Increased profitability for individual grain growing enterprises, which contributes to higher employment and jobs growth.

**ENDS**

**For interviews:** Darren Arney, GPSA chief executive officer, 0448 186 707