

GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS - SOUTH AUSTRALIAN STUDY

**1046. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:**

- (1) Did the minister provide \$92 000 of Western Australian taxpayers' funds to a South Australian study into the effects of genetically modified organisms?
- (2) If so when, what were the results of that study and will he table them?
- (3) Has he funded any similar Western Australian study?

**Hon KIM CHANCE replied:**

- (1) No, I did not provide the funding; it was a decision of cabinet.
- (2) It was about April 2005, from memory. The agreement was made in about April 2005. I do not think any money has been transferred at this stage. The trials are not yet completed so we will know those results I believe some time in 2008.
- (3) No similar Western Australian studies have been undertaken that I am aware of. There have been no approaches to the Western Australian government to fund similar long-term animal feeding studies.

The person carrying out these studies, Dr Judy Carman, is probably the foremost scientist in Australia in this field. She was in fact the scientist chosen by the Australian government to analyse the impact on the human and animal population of Australia after the unauthorised release of calicivirus from the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation facility in South Australia. She was chosen presumably because she was the foremost scientist in that field. We were delighted that she approached us with a proposal for a long-term trial to fill a gap in an area - a very clear gap of knowledge - on the long-term effect of animals eating GM foods. In all that time, and despite all the publicity about the funding of the trial, no Western Australian scientist, researcher or research organisation, including universities, has ever made a direct approach to government for funding for trials of a similar nature.