

GENETICALLY MODIFIED WHEAT CROPS — TRIAL STATISTICS

5859. Mr M.P. Murray to the Minister for Agriculture and Food

In relation to the genetically modified (GM) wheat trials being conducted on a property in the Wheatbelt town of Merredin, I ask:

- (a) how many trials of GM wheat are to be conducted in Western Australia;
- (b) how many field trials of GM wheat will be conducted in Western Australia;
- (c) how many hectares will be involved in these trials;
- (d) what research has been done on marketing GM wheat;
- (e) what countries have been surveyed on their acceptance of GM wheat;
- (f) who is conducting the GM wheat trials; and
- (g) what partnerships are involved in the GM wheat trials?

Mr D.T. REDMAN replied:

- (a)–(b) In 2011, there is one Office of Gene Technology Regulator (OGTR) approved field trial of GM wheat in Western Australia.
- (c) According to the OGTR website 0.3904 hectares is the total area of the GM wheat and GM barley trial at Merredin.
- (d) The Grain Growers Limited Stakeholders Report 2011 titled What the World Wants from Australian Wheat summarises of the outcomes of interviews with flour and stockfeed manufacturers in Australia and flour millers in South East Asia, North Asia, the Middle East and Europe. The report concluded that: (1) GM wheat would not be acceptable for the Australian, North Asian and European markets in the foreseeable future; (2) Food security concerns may assist acceptance of GM wheat in South East Asia; and (3) After at least five years GM wheat will be acceptable in the Middle East.
- (e) The What the World Wants from Australian Wheat report is not specific about the countries consulted, but indicates that flour millers in all the countries which import Australian wheat were involved. These countries are Indonesia, Malaysia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Egypt, Sudan, China, Vietnam, Yemen, Thailand, New Zealand, India, Kuwait, Italy and the United Arab Emirates.
- (f) The Department of Agriculture and Food is carrying out the GM wheat trial at Merredin for CSIRO.
- (g) Two GM traits are being trialled at Merredin; one is co-funded by the CSIRO and Grains Research & Development Corporation. The other trait is part of a research collaboration between CSIRO, the Australian Centre for Plant Functional Genomics and Arcadia Biosciences, a US biotechnology company.