

FOOD LABELLING — GM CONTENT

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

- (1) Is it the Government's intention to develop an intergovernmental group to look at changes to food labelling for products consumed in Western Australia, and if so:
- (a) does the Minister intend to address Genetically Modified (GM) content in foods as one of the issues under consideration;
 - (b) will the Minister ensure that foods that contain any GM content at all will be advertised on the label; and
 - (c) can the Western Australian consumer be certain that they can make a 100% anti-GM choice when purchasing foods?

Mr D.T. REDMAN replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (a) Yes. In accordance with Government policy, the Department of Agriculture and Food is establishing an interdepartmental committee to review options for the labelling of genetically modified food and initiatives to improve compliance with labelling requirements.
 - (b) It is not possible to give that assurance. The labelling of food in Australia is a Commonwealth responsibility. In accordance with the Australia and New Zealand Food Standards Code, all food and food ingredients that contain novel DNA and/or protein or has 'altered characteristics' must be labelled as 'genetically modified' if they contain one per cent or more GM ingredients. The Australian labelling requirements are recognised as being one of the most stringent in the world.
 - (c) To my knowledge all fresh food produced in Western Australia is GM free. Consumers can also look for specifically labelled GM free products.