

GENETICALLY MODIFIED CANOLA CONTAMINATION — KOJONUP

4972. Mr M.P. Murray to the Minister for Agriculture and Food

I refer to the State Government's commitment to cleaning up the Esperance and Geraldton town-site of lead and nickel contamination, and the Geraldton port from next week, to rule out any risk of lead contamination. I also refer to the Premier's statement that he was taking a hands-on approach to the cleanup, and I ask:

- (a) will the Minister for Agriculture and Food take a hands-on approach for the cleanup of the genetically modified (GM) canola contamination on Steve Marsh's Kojanup organic farm after the recent storms;
- (b) will Western Australian farmers' properties get the same treatment as other contaminated areas within the State; and
- (c) can the Minister explain why Government departments are involved in the cleanup of lead contamination in Esperance but are not involved in the cleanup of GM canola contamination on non-GM farms?

Mr D.T. REDMAN replied:

- (a) Nickel and lead are harmful to people and the environment so the State Government has committed to cleanup Geraldton town and Esperance port. The Australian Gene Technology Regulator has concluded that GM canola is as safe as non-GM canola to humans and the environment. The Minister and DAFWA have not committed to removing GM plant material from Mr Marsh's property.
- (b)–(c) No, as explained in the previous answer Australian Gene Technology Regulator-licensed GM canola is a legal crop and is not toxic so it is not a contaminant.