

LIVE SHEEP FEEDLOTS, SABOTAGE

1566. Hon JIM SCOTT to the Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries:

- (1) In noting that the minister has described the feeding of ham to sheep as economic sabotage, is this action likely to impact adversely on the live sheep market?
- (2) Does the minister describe the growing of genetically modified crops in Western Australia as economic sabotage, when the bulk of the evidence shows that contamination of our grain crops through the spread of this material would cause severe economic harm to Western Australian grain growers?

Hon KIM CHANCE replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) This matter has been dealt with quickly and efficiently by the relevant Australian Government and Victorian authorities. We would expect the market to adopt a cautious approach. I am not able to judge whether there will be an economic impact on the live sheep trade at this point, although that was clearly the offender's intention.
- (2) No. I do not describe any legal act as sabotage. As the member knows, the Government is taking a cautious approach to the issue of genetically modified crops, and possible economic consequences will always be a part of any consideration of the matter. The very reason for the Gallop Government's actions to control the entry of GM crops into Western Australia agriculture is based on the need to ensure that no such economic harm can occur, and that is something that I hope the member supports.