

GENETICALLY MODIFIED CANOLA — CROP SEGREGATION PROTOCOLS

10. Mr M.P. MURRAY to the Minister for Agriculture:

Mr Speaker —

Mrs C.A. Martin interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Kimberley, your colleague has the call at the moment. You do not. I formally call you for the first time.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: Given the minister's response to the previous question, I ask: can the minister advise precisely whether the 2009 segregation protocols relating to the growing, harvesting, transporting and receipt of GM canola crops will be maintained with the same standard in 2010?

Mr D.T. REDMAN replied:

I thank the member for the question. It is really interesting to see that he has been remarkably quiet on this issue over the summer period. The challenge that he faces is that the Western Australian Labor Party stands alone on this issue. At the federal level and in New South Wales and Victoria they support the position that we have taken on GM crops.

Throughout the trial process I made it very, very clear that we would deal with two issues as part of the trials, including looking at our capacity to segregate. It comes as no surprise that our systems are good enough to do exactly that because they have been doing it for years. They are good at it. We can segregate 15 different varieties of barley that look exactly the same in the bottom of a bucket. If we cannot segregate canola from GM canola, there is something wrong with our system. We have been able to show it is the case. We knew that was going to be the case. Last year's trial demonstrated exactly that. The protocols that are in place are exactly the same protocols that we used to segregate all our grains throughout the harvesting system and throughout the process of delivering grain to a range of markets. We need to sign off and industry needs to sign off to show that, if it is putting a particular grain into a particular market, it has the integrity of a process that sits behind it. It has been doing that for years. There is no reason why this does not fit nicely into that.

In response to the question, the protocols are in place. I am confident that they are going to maintain a level of segregation because that is what they have been doing for years and that is what they have been doing well.