

GENETICALLY MODIFIED CANOLA CROPS — CROSS-CONTAMINATION POSSIBILITY

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

With reference to the intended Genetically Modified Canola 1000ha trials, I ask:

- (a) under what form of protocols are the trials to be conducted;
- (b) what mechanisms will be in place if the trials result in contamination of adjacent properties;
- (c) who will accept liability if there is contamination; and
- (d) does the Government intend to recompense adjacent properties if there is detectable contamination?

Mr D.T. REDMAN replied:

- (a) The trials will be conducted on farms accredited by CBH (Better Farm Integrated Quality), and Monsanto (Stewardship protocols for Roundup Ready canola). The proponents will also require the approval of the Director General of Agriculture and Food. The trial sites will be closely managed and monitored by industry and audited by the Department of Agriculture and Food. Post-trial monitoring will be conducted in accordance with the Department of Agriculture and Food protocols.
- (b) Any unintended presence of Roundup Ready canola will be managed by Officers authorized under the GM Crops Free Areas Act 2003.
- (c) Should a situation of alleged loss caused by GM to a non-GM crop arise, the person suffering the damage could seek redress through an action for negligence, nuisance or trespass, depending on the circumstances involved. The need for governments to impose some kind of statutory liability on GM farmers was examined in 2005-06 during the review of the Commonwealth Gene Technology Act 2000 and no necessity for government intervention was identified.
- (d) No.