

GENETICALLY MODIFIED CANOLA — EUROPEAN UNION'S CONCERNS

136. Mr M.P. MURRAY to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

I have a supplementary question. One part of the question I asked was: has the minister published a public register that will allow all farmers and interested parties, including some of those buyers, to know who is intending to plant and who is currently planting GM canola?

Mr D.T. REDMAN replied:

In my enthusiasm to respond to the first part of the question, the member is quite right, I neglected to answer a couple of points in his question. He asked about the register of GM growers. We are at the front of the season now; a range of growers have sought to do the stewardship program. Some are intending to grow GM crops and some are not. They are at the start of the season so it is really difficult at this time to know who is and who is not going to grow GM crops. It is certainly my commitment, once that information comes to hand—we are only into the start of the season and not all growers have cranked up their machines to put in their crops at this time —

Mr M.P. Murray: You made a promise and you reneged.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: That highlights the knowledge and understanding the member for Collie–Preston has of the agricultural community in Western Australia. It is getting towards the end of April and we are right at the start of the season. There is a good month left of the likely starting time for Western Australian farmers to get into their paddocks and grow crops. A lot of them are still making decisions about what they will grow on the basis of the season. There are a whole range of factors for them to consider. This is basic knowledge when it comes to the farming community of Western Australia.