

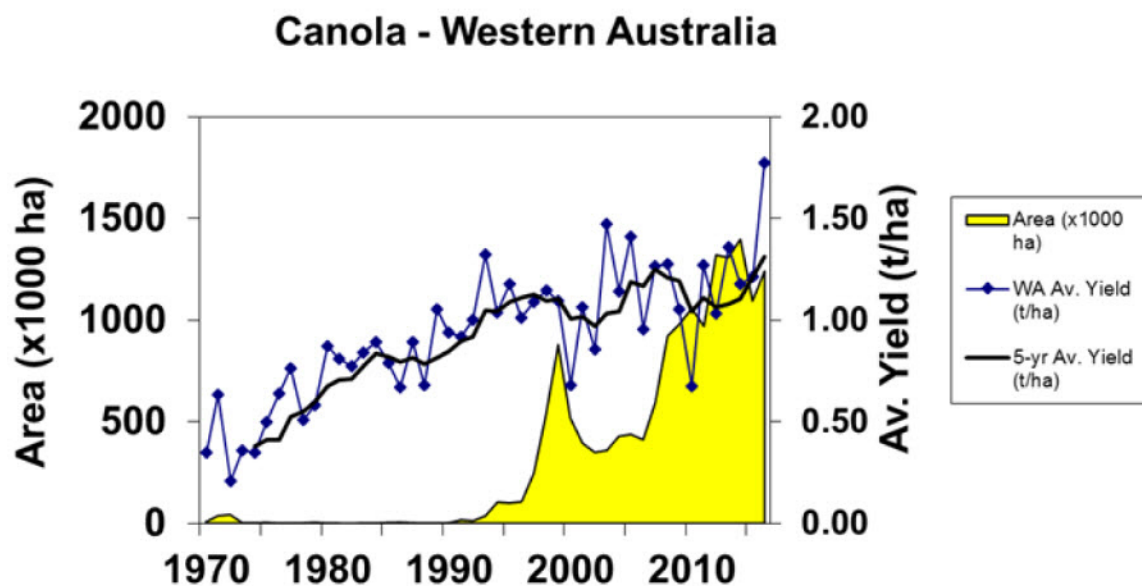
**From:**  
**To:** [Environment and Public Affairs Committee](#)  
**Subject:** WA Parliamentary Inquiry into GM contamination on farms- submission  
**Date:** Friday, 9 February 2018 4:01:23 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)

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Dear Committee,

I would like convey the following comments in relation to the above subject.

There is only one genetically modified organism in Western Australian agriculture, which is canola. This product was approved following the stringent requirements of federal legislation. The presence of legally-grown genetically modified canola in WA has contributed to an increase in area of production and yield per hectare since 2010:



Source: ABARE Australian Crop Report

There has been no visible negative impact from the introduction of GM canola in Western Australia, as shown by the graph above. If anything, the introduction of GM canola has contributed to improved sustainability of production of canola in the long-term.

The canola industry includes both GM and non-GM canola markets. Growing both types of crops is possible on the same farm, because the two types of canola seed, GM and non-GM, are marketed separately in national and international markets.

Therefore, it is unclear what the parliamentary committee will investigate. The committee states that it will investigate "mechanisms for compensation for economic loss to farmers in Western Australia caused by contamination by genetically modified material." But there is no evidence of such losses to non-GM growers in the grainbelt of WA; in fact, the opposite occurs – non-GM growers are favoured by higher prices for non-GM product that meets the EU standards of  $\leq 0.9\%$  of GM adventitious presence in non-GM canola. Therefore, the production of non-GM canola is secure in WA and supported by EU countries who prefer non-GM grain from WA due to its low carbon footprint. EU accepts up to 0.9% of GM adventitious presence in non-GM canola. This is easily achieved by most growers of non-GM canola in WA, even when the two products are grown on the same farm. WA has a secure high-profit market for non-GM canola in the EU and elsewhere. On the surface, it seems the committee has no work, because there is no problem.

The recent high court decision disallowed a claim for compensation of an organic canola grower against a neighbour who grew GM canola. The legal argument partly rested on the case that the organic association needed to stop using a claim of "GM free", when the industry in Europe and elsewhere accepts up to 0.9% of GM adventitious presence in non-GM canola. There has to be practical and sensible approach to the GM adventitious issue. "GM-free" is impossible to claim and impossible to measure. Any legal jurisdiction will avoid penalising or

compensating growers on the basis of such an industry standard. It is not practical or enforceable.

The use of GM technology has been, and will continue to be, very valuable to help feed the world and improve the economy of Western Australia. GM canola growers and non-GM canola growers have learned to live together, and will continue to do so as new GM products are approved through the federal regulatory system.

I hope that the above comments are useful.

Yours sincerely,

Kadambot Siddique

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**Hackett Professor of Agriculture Chair and Director**

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