



MEDIA STATEMENT

LIFTING GM MORATORIUM WILL DELIVER CHOICE TO SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FARMERS

20 August 2019 (CANBERRA)

The Australian Seed Federation (ASF) welcomes the recent announcement by Minister Whetstone and the Marshall Government to lift the GM moratorium on mainland South Australia.

For over a decade, South Australian farmers have been denied the ability to choose from the full suite of tools that have been available to their competitors in neighbouring states. As demonstrated by the recent Independent Anderson Review, they have been farming with one hand tied behind their back.

Multiple independent reports have demonstrated there is no trade and marketing benefit to maintaining the GM moratorium in South Australia. The Anderson review found that the GM moratorium has cost the state's canola industry \$33 million since 2004, with no tangible trade or marketing benefit in return.

The South Australian GM moratorium restricted growth and innovation in the State's agricultural sector. It denied South Australian farmers access to innovative breeding technologies and new crops both now and in the future, and banned the transport of GM seed across the state.

The GM seed transport ban had significant negative implications for the Australian seed industry. It resulted in increased cost to seed producers and long delays resulting from having to use other transportation measures to divert genetically modified seed around South Australia.

To remain internationally competitive and meet the potential for future growth will depend on the South Australian Government's continued adoption of policies that embrace innovation, engage investment and bring new technologies to market in a timely manner. The ASF supports choice in relation to crop biotechnology provided that the choice is based on sound science and respects the rights of others to also choose.

The strong leadership shown by Minister Whetstone and the Marshall Government, and their commitment to scientific and economic evidence over fear and scaremongering is to be commended.

Statement attributable to Osman Mewett, General Manager, Australian Seed Federation

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About the Australian Seed Federation

The ASF is the peak national body representing the interests of Australia's sowing seed industry at the state, national and international levels. The ASF membership base comprises stakeholders from all sectors of the seed supply chain including plant breeders, seed growers, seed processors and seed marketers.