



## MEDIA RELEASE

### Allowing GM cropping will unshackle South Australian agriculture

13 May 2020 (Canberra) – South Australia’s farmers can finally choose to access GM crop innovations that have been approved for commercial cultivation in Australia since 2003.

General Manager of the Australian Seed Federation, Osman Mewett, said, “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 colleagues in neighbouring states. They have been farming with one hand tied behind their back.

“In addition to the strong leadership shown by Premier Marshall and Minister Whetstone, I commend Opposition Leader Peter Malinauskas, and Shadow Minister for Primary Industries & Regional Development, Eddie Hughes, for putting party politics to the side and delivering a way forward that will benefit all South Australians. While the compromise position is not the seed industry’s first choice outcome, we acknowledge the constructive result that has been achieved.

“The GM crop moratorium has restricted the incentive for South Australian researchers to develop agricultural biotechnologies for South Australia. It has denied South Australian farmers access to innovative breeding methods and new crops both now and in the future, and it has banned the transport of GM seed across the state.

“The GM seed transport ban had a significant negative impact on the Australian seed industry, resulting in increased costs to seed producers and long delays from having to use other transport measures to divert genetically modified seed around South Australia.

“Multiple independent reviews demonstrated there is no trade and marketing benefit to maintaining the GM moratorium in South Australia. The most recent review by Professor Anderson found that the GM moratorium has cost the state’s canola industry \$33 million, with no tangible trade or marketing benefit in return.

“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 investors and bring new technologies to market in a timely manner.

Mr Mewett concluded, “Now farmers on mainland South Australia will have the ability to choose those farming tools that work best for them and not have politics stand in the way of their ability to innovate.”

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#### About Australian Seed Federation

The Australian Seed Federation (ASF) is the peak industry body for the Australian seed industry at the local, state, national and international level. The ASF also represents its members internationally, as a member of the International Seed Federation (ISF) and the Asia Pacific Seed Association (APSA).

The ASF strives to deliver *Sustainability, Leadership, Integrity and Collaboration* on key issues including climate change adaptation, world food security, technological developments, trade, and the growth in productivity of Australian and international agriculture, through the delivery and supply of new and improved commodities and services to the market.