



MEDIA RELEASE

Seed industry welcomes farmer choice on GM in South Australia

02 November 2020 Canberra – All farmers across mainland South Australia will now have the choice to grow approved genetically modified (GM) crops in time for the 2021 grain planting season.

Osman Mewett, Chief Executive of the Australian Seed Federation said “I commend Minister Basham and the Marshall Government for putting science before rhetoric and delivering choice to the South Australian agricultural sector.

“For too long, 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.

“The GM crop moratorium restricted the incentive for South Australian researchers to develop agricultural biotechnologies for South Australia. It denied South Australian farmers access to innovative breeding methods and new crops, and it 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.

Mr Mewett concluded, “Co-existence between organic, conventional and GM production systems has worked efficiently and effectively in neighbouring states for more than a decade, and now farmers on mainland South Australia will have the ability to choose those farming tools that work best for them on their land and not have politics stand in the way.”

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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.