

# Genetically Modified Crops



The Liberal-led Government has ensured Western Australia's farmers have access to the most technologically advanced and productive grain varieties by overturning Labor's restrictive laws prohibiting genetically modified (GM) crops.

WA growers can now access new GM crops that have been approved by the Australian Office of the Gene Technology Regulator.

Western Australian farmers now produce the vast majority of Australia's GM canola.

In 2016 WA farmers planted an estimated 350,000ha of GM canola, about a third of WA's 1,176,000ha canola crop, and 78 per cent of Australia's total 448,000ha GM canola crop.

## Fast Facts:

- In 2009 an order to allow GM cotton to be grown in the Ord River irrigation area was made and in 2010, following a trial, an order to allow GM canola to be grown within Western Australia was also issued.
- In 2016 the Genetically Modified Crops Free Areas Act 2003 was repealed by the Liberal-led Government.
- More than 1,268,000ha of GM canola have been planted since 2008 – worth almost \$1 billion.
- In 2015 the total area sown to canola was 1,168,672ha the total area sown to GM canola was 302,545ha or 25.9%.
- Australia has a rigorous regulatory system through the Office of Gene Technology Regulator, for GM organisms.
- The WA grains industry has protocols and processes to enable growers to deliver GM and non-GM canola to meet market requirements.
- Western Australian grain exports are worth \$4-5 billion each year.



## GM Crops

Labor's ridiculously old-fashioned and anti-science laws created a number of market inefficiencies and limitations and imposed a competitive disadvantage on Western Australian growers, compared to jurisdictions with access to GM seed.

They prevented growers accessing gene technology even after the technology had been assessed and licensed by the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator.

The Genetically Modified Crops Free Areas Act 2003 also created a legislative burden and red tape and was a disincentive for scientific researchers to invest in WA.

## Grains Research

The Liberal-led Government has announced \$54.4 million towards grains research and development to drive the long-term growth of our grains sector, reinvigorate grain crop science, innovation and technology to ensure WA grain growers continue to improve productivity and profitability into the future.

This will enable a new Western Australian grains research and development model to be established and ensure essential grains science capacity remains in the WA Department of Agriculture and Food.

## Our Commitment

A Liberal Government will continue to allow farmers to grow GM canola.

The Liberals support farmers in ensuring they have access to new technology and cutting-edge scientific research to improve productivity.

Labor's recent backflip on GM canola has come only after the Liberals led the way in showing the value of new technology, exposing Labor's anti-GM position as ignorant nonsense.



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Authorised by A.Cox, 2/12 Parliament Place, West Perth WA 6005.

