

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2008

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: GRDC 01

Division/Agency: Grains Research and Development Corporation

Topic: Survey of farmers growing genetically modified canola

Hansard Page: 87/88 (20/10/08)

Senator Siewert asked:

Senator SIEWERT—Those farmers that you are talking to are the farmers that are growing the GE crops. In that survey are you also talking to their neighbours who are not growing it to see whether there are any issues there and, if so, what the issues are?

Mr Reading—I will check the detail of that. At this stage, though, it is primarily just concentrating on the growers that grew it. I will take that on notice.

Answer:

The GRDC plans to include in the survey a sample of neighbouring farmers who did not grow genetically modified canola.

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Question: GRDC 02

Division/Agency: Grains Research and Development Corporation

Topic: Details of research projects involving genetically modified canola

Hansard Page: 88 (20/10/08)

Senator Siewert asked:

Senator SIEWERT—Can you provide details of those three projects—how much they are and how long they are for—and in particular the herbicide resistance one because that is a longer term project? You can take this on notice so I do not take up the committee's time.

Mr Reading—Certainly.

Answer:

The first two projects referred to in Mr Reading's answer have been combined into the following project:

Re: Studies of pollen flow and herbicide resistance in relation to GM canola

Pollen flow among commercial canola crops was measured in 2000 through the use of varieties resistant to acetolactate synthase (ALS)–inhibiting herbicides. The results showed that pollen flow was low (averaging less than 0.01%). Following the commercial release of genetically modified (GM) Roundup Ready canola, a single, five-year project running from 01/10/2008 to 30/09/2013 and costing a total of \$815,680 (excluding GST) funded by the GRDC with co-investment from the University of Melbourne and Charles Sturt University, will validate existing scientific knowledge around pollen flow and herbicide resistance, in relation to GM canola.

Re: Follow-up survey regarding GM canola in NSW and Victoria

The survey will be for 3 years. The total cost is still under negotiation.