

## Lifting of Genetically Modified Crops Moratorium – Community Consultation Information

### Overview

A moratorium on the production of Genetically Modified Crops (GMCs) was introduced in South Australia via the *Genetically Modified Crops Management Act 2004*. This restricted the farming of GMCs throughout the whole of the State.

A Bill recently passed through Parliament on 30 April 2020 to limit the moratorium to Kangaroo Island only, opening up the growing of GMCs throughout the remainder of the State. Councils have the opportunity to petition the Minister for Primary Industries to apply to be a non-GM crop cultivation area; the whole process must be completed by 15 November 2020, see further [information from the Department for Primary Industries and Regions SA here](#).

The Town of Gawler now seeks to consult with its Community on whether such an application to the Minister should be made by Council. The public consultation commences **Wednesday 15 July and concludes on Tuesday 4 August 2020**.

Following the consultation, Council will make a decision as to whether it will seek to lodge an application. If Council is to lodge an application, Council will need to demonstrate to the Minister that primary producers and/or food processors and manufacturers in the Town of Gawler are currently receiving a marketing or trade advantage, including any price premiums, as a result of being a no GM food crop area.

### Background

In late 2018, an [independent review of South Australia's moratorium on the cultivation of genetically modified food crops](#) was undertaken by Emeritus Professor Kym Anderson AC.

Creation of a genetically modified plant, animal or organism is regulated by [The Office of the Gene Technology Regulator](#) (the Regulator), in order that the public and the environment are protected.

Approval is required under the relevant biosecurity and gene technology legislation to import live genetically modified organisms (GMOs), which include GMCs, into Australia. The Regulator must also authorise the growing, transport or any other dealings with GMCs in Australia and a licence must be issued to anybody wishing to grow a GMC – see [fact sheets here](#).

Field trials are limited in size and duration and are subject to strict containment conditions to manage potential spread. Trials are inspected to ensure they are compliant with licence conditions.

There are approximately 80 GMCs grown around the world. Currently, three GMCs are grown in Australia: canola; cotton and safflower. A number of experimental field plantings are being conducted for bananas, barley, ryegrass, mustard, sugarcane and wheat. Trials have also been conducted in the past for rice, clover, maize, poppy, papaya, pineapple and grapevines.

GMC technology produces drought and herbicide resistant plants. In addition, GM plants can produce their own toxin to eradicate pests which attack them. They can also improve salt intolerance, disease resistance, yield and nutrient use efficiency.

If it proceeds unaltered, restrictions in all areas of South Australia except Kangaroo Island will be lifted subject to individual council interest and action taken in this regard. A high-level independent expert review and extensive industry and community consultation were conducted prior to the acceptance of the Bill by Parliament.

**If you have any questions regarding this information or the applicable Town of Gawler's Community Consultation process, please contact Senior Development and Strategic Policy Officer, Jane Strange on 08 8522 0134 or [jane.strange@gawler.sa.gov.au](mailto:jane.strange@gawler.sa.gov.au).**