

Gene Ethics: News Media Release 28 September 2016
Bright prospects for South Australia's GM-free food and beverages

Agriculture Minister Leon Bignell has released the Uni of Adelaide report he commissioned, entitled: **"Identification and Assessment of Added-Value Export Market Opportunities for Non-GMO Labelled Food Products from South Australia"**. The report finds strong evidence that present and potential demand for South Australia's GM-free food and beverages is strong and demand for organic growing.

"A partnership of the SA government and food industry working together could achieve a GM-free and naturally healthy food bonanza for the state," says Gene Ethics Director, Bob Phelps.

"We fully support the report's conclusion that: **'opportunity lies in promoting a broad-based platform of 'naturally healthy' products (that are GM-free) from South Australia with claims that can be underpinned by traceability and verification systems.'**

"South Australia's GM-free food and wine industry has a very bright future as it earns \$18.2 billion, or 46%, of the state's product exports.

"It is great news that South Australia can benefit from the large and growing demand for GM-free, premium foods and beverages in China, Japan and the USA.

"If SA went organic and stayed GM-free, the report confirms that China, Japan and the USA markets would guarantee export success.

"Telling the truth and good news about the fabulous SA food industry has to offer will ensure that sophisticated shoppers everywhere want SA's natural and healthy foods and beverages. They will also pay premiums when they know and trust the producers and suppliers," he says.

"The report should not have ignored the strong domestic demand for premium GM-free, labelled foods among 25 million Australians. This is a good basis for growing GM-free export markets, as our national food industry feeds only around 60 million people. (The attached GM-free Shopping List also shows strong present and potential demand)

"The report resoundingly refutes the Productivity Commission's **draft** Agricultural Regulation report recommendations to the federal government which only serve the interests of foreign GM and agrochemical industries by removing:

1. State's rights to declare GM-free Zones for marketing reasons; and
 2. the requirement to label GM foods in New Zealand and Australia.
- <http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/current/agriculture/draft>

"Grain Producers SA petition to lift SA's GM ban has little credibility and weak support from most farmers and the food industry.

"They also misled the Uni of Adelaide researchers on the lucerne seed industry's stance. GM lucerne would wreck Middle East and US export markets which will buy only GM-free lucerne seed from Australia. They merely promote the interests of CropLife and AusBiotech that are the voice for the 3 mega companies that own most of the GM and agricultural industries.

"South Australian food and wine industries can prosper by staying GM-free and going organic, so the state is on a definite winner if it plays its cards right," Mr Phelps concludes.

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