

Cropwatch Media Release - Wednesday November 26, 2008

Community Cleanup of GM canola contamination at Horsham

Angry growers will do a Community Cleanup of GM canola contamination at 11am Thursday November 27, to quarantine plants and seed on roadsides near Horsham. The GM canola from Geoff Rethus's crop is on the Natimuk/Rudolph's Rd junction at the rifle range (see: <http://www.abc.net.au/rural/content/2008/s2430206.htm?site=local>)

"Community members will cleanup the GM canola spill as Agriculture Minister Joe Helper and the Horsham Council both flatly refuse to take any remedial action," says GM Cropwatch's Jessica Harrison.

"This GM contamination fiasco damns the Minister's claims that wind blown GM canola 'is not an issue' and that Cropwatch and the Network of Concerned Farmer's concerns about GM contamination are 'over the top'.

"Helper and Brumby thumb their noses at the GM-free majority, by allowing Monsanto to threaten the markets of all rural industries that need to be GM-free.

"Less than one in a thousand Australian growers claim the right to drive Monsanto's GM business model that will force Roundup tolerant GM canola onto everyone else.

"Just fifteen GM cowboys will deliver GM canola to the Lubeck silo this year, yet GM contamination is already out of control and uncontained," Ms Harrison says.

"The government says it gave GM growers choice, so it owes a choice too GM-free industries too.

"Brumby and Helper approve of the routine GM contamination which Monsanto's spokesperson Buckingham cavalierly dismisses as 'always expected and anticipated' by government regulators.

"We challenge the Minister's view that:
farmers are solely responsible for containing material on their farms - GM and conventional;
segregation will only be managed at the silo and later supply chain systems;
farms and transport are not subject to the single vision segregation system.

"Self-regulation under the industry's single vision has failed, so the Brumby government must apply strict pollution laws to this GM harvest, securely monitor and manage all the GM sites and ensure that all GM canola cut for hay is fed where it stands or burned.

The Canadian countryside and the GM-free canola supply were contaminated within two years so that the GM rollout was irreversible and GM-free canola became impossible to grow.

"Cropwatch will continue to monitor, test and clean up GM canola contamination around farms, roadsides and the Lubeck silo until the government reimposes its ban on GM canola," Ms Harrison concludes.

More comment: Jessica Harrison GM Cropwatch 0407 307 231