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ALP breaks promises on Genetic Manipulation

Kevin Rudd promised stronger laws on Genetically Manipulated (GM) foods and crops before the last election. Now the ALP's proposed platform would break Rudd's promises and dilute existing ALP policy.

“This betrayal will fast track GM into our crops and foods without the checks and balances that Rudd promised,” says Gene Ethics Director Bob Phelps.

“We want the ALP to adopt as part of its platform, the promises that Rudd made on November 6 2007 when he promised that, if elected, his government would:

- **ensure** GM crops are not released unless there is whole of community consensus;
- **establish** a meaningful labeling regime that enables consumers to make informed choices about what they are buying;
- **ensure** accurate information on GM products is provided to consumers and the community;
- **maintain** consumer and environmental safety through strict enforcement of national standards as the principal policy consideration;
- **undertake** continued research on the use of foods containing GMOs to better understand health, safety and environmental risks and benefits;
- **introduce** a rigorous and transparent process based on environmental and safety considerations, for assessing and approving or rejecting research proposals which require release of GMOs outside the laboratory;
- **preserve** the right of the States to implement and manage moratoria on the commercial production of GM crops. To ensure our food is safe and of high quality.
- **ensure** all issues pertaining to import, export, production, distribution and use of GM Organisms (GMOs) are overseen by a strong national body that is independent, scientifically-based and whose processes are transparent.

“The ALP should adopt these promises as policy, and reject the proposed new national platform that would gut existing ALP policy,” Mr Phelps says.

“Rudd implements Howard's policies and will not deliver on his own promises. For instance, government has allocated \$38.2 million to develop and promote biotechnology and nanotechnology. This is public money for private profits, spent on technologies that falsely claim solve new problems like global climate change, the end of oil and food security.

“The products of GM and nanotechnologies will worsen, not resolve, new crises,” he says.

“We call on the ALP conference to reject proposals 95, 96, 97 and 98, and incorporate Rudd's promises into the platform instead,” Mr Phelps concludes.

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