

Supplementary submission to the Committee re Gene Technology Bill

Dear Senator Humphries:

Please accept this text as a further submission to the committee.

In evidence to the Committee on Monday, Mr Penna of Bayer Cropscience (formerly Aventis/AgrEvo) and Mr Khoo of Monsanto, in response to a question from Senator Siewert, said:

Senator SIEWERT-We heard earlier from Mr Phelps about GM turning up around Mount Gambier-and I think you were here.

Mr Penna-That was about crops that had been designated as safe by the regulator and **allowed**

commercial release (1). The contamination, for want of a better word, **did not relate to dealings under the act but rather to matters under state jurisdiction (2)**.

Mr Khoo-On the contamination in Mount Gambier: **there has been no contamination in Mount Gambier (3)**. We do trials in Mount Gambier, and **they are all done under state legislation (4)** that has very strict containment conditions in it. **There has been no instance of contamination in Mount Gambier (5)**. The so-called contamination refers to **the finding of some GM canola in non-GM canola of the variety called Grace (6)**, and that happened a couple of years ago.

Senator SIEWERT-So why is that not contamination?

Mr Khoo-It was not in the Mount Gambier region.

Senator SIEWERT-I beg your pardon-it was in another region.

Mr Khoo-Yes, it was a different thing.

This could have left the impression that I had misled or misinformed the Committee. I therefore submit, the following to substantiate my evidence:

(1) the unauthorised releases which caused contamination, to which I referred in evidence, were in Aventis/Bayer trials. They were not commercial releases, as no commercial canola licences had been issued in 2000 (see Pp 3&4 of bulletin5 attached).

(2) in 2000 there was no state jurisdiction over GMOs as the GT Act had not yet been passed and the COAG agreement was not in place.

(3) GM canola was disgarded on a roadside and local rubbish dump in cotravention of GMAC and IOGTR guidelines.

(4) No. Monsanto has OGTR trial licences for canola and mustard. Bayer is growing GM canola under state jurisdiction, with exemptions from the state moratoria.

(5) there has been GM canola in the Mt Gambier region, as evidenced below.

(6) this more recent contamination was on Geoffrey Caracher's farm at Minimay Victoria, near the South Australian border and not far from mt Gambier.

Please see below some of the reportage of the time which substantiates my reference to the contamination and unauthorised handling of GM canola. The IOGTR's official record of dealings under the GMAC system of voluntary guidelines also documents the circumstances of breaches of guidelines and unauthorised handling of GMOs near Mt Gambier around the year 2000 (**see bulletin5 attached or visit:** <http://www.ogtr.gov.au/pdf/volsys/bulletin5.pdf>).

Yours sincerely,

Bob Phelps
Gene Ethics

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