GENE TECHNOLOGY GRAINS COMMITTEE

Coexistence of Supply Chains

Keith Alcock

August 2002

GENE TECHNOLOGY GRAINS COMMITTEE

Introduction

- Current status of GM crops in Australia.
- GM Canola Technical Working Group.
- Gene Technology Grains Committee.
- Regulatory framework for GM crops.
- Principles of Coexistence.
- Code of Practice.
- Conclusions.

GENE TECHNOLOGY GRAINS COMMITTEE

GTGC membership

- Broad Industry associations.
- Farmer organisations.
- Grain handlers.
- Grain marketers.
- Processors.
- Technology providers.
- State Departments of Agriculture.
- Commonwealth agencies.

GENE TECHNOLOGY GRAINS COMMITTEE

Achievements of the GTGC

- Information gathering to identify areas of concern.
- Identification of market access issues and implications for industry.
- Code of practice for field trials.
- Risk management in farming systems – ‘gene flow’.
  - Weediness potential of volunteer and potential for outcrossing into weedy relatives
  - Potential for cross-pollination between canola fields
- ‘Industry Issues and Information’ consultation paper.

GENE TECHNOLOGY GRAINS COMMITTEE

Regulatory Framework

- Gene Technology Ministerial Council administers the Gene Technology Act 2000.
- OGTR responsible for human health and environmental risk assessment.
- Trade risk decisions State by State under GTMC policy principle.
- Primary Industries Ministerial Council oversees agricultural systems and trade risk assessment.
- Management of risks to agricultural production by industry self-regulation supplemented by Government monitoring, with review in two years.

GENE TECHNOLOGY GRAINS COMMITTEE

Table of leadership

	Agency	OGTR	NRA	PIC	GTGC	FSANZ	Tech. Providers
Pre-farm	Breeding	✓					✓
	Production						✓
	Processing						✓
	Distribution						✓
	Marketing						✓
On-farm	Resistance management		✓	✓	✓		
	Farming systems	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Crop production	✓		✓			
Post-farm	Transport / delivery				✓		
	Storage				✓		
	Handling				✓		
	Marketing				✓		
Overarching	Environment	✓					
	Health	✓				✓	
	Biosecurity	✓					
	Education and training						✓

GENE TECHNOLOGY GRAINS COMMITTEE

Current focus of the GTGC

- **Links with Plant Industries Committee and Primary Industries Ministerial Council.**
- **Delivering ‘risk management to agricultural production and trade by industry self-regulation’.**
- **A strategic framework for maintaining coexistence of supply chains.**
- **Developing a Code of Practice to maintain coexistence.**

GENE TECHNOLOGY GRAINS COMMITTEE

Objectives of coexistence

To enable:

- **Each grain supply chain participant to competitively meet the requirements of their chosen market, recognising that these will ultimately be determined by consumer preference and regulatory requirements.**
- **The release of genetically modified crops into the environment in a manner that maintains or enhances the natural resource base and minimises the offsite impacts of agricultural and related activities.**
- **Producers to utilise technologies most appropriate to their chosen farming systems.**
- **The incorporation of genetically modified crops into individual farming systems using crop management techniques that maximise the effective life of the technology.**

GENE TECHNOLOGY GRAINS COMMITTEE

Principles of Coexistence

- **Transparency and consultation.**
- **Freedom of choice.**
- **Reasonable measures.**
- **Responsibility to act.**
- **Monitoring and review.**
- **Case-by-case planning.**

GENE TECHNOLOGY GRAINS COMMITTEE

Conclusions

- With continued coexistence of supply chains, producers are free to choose between GM, non-GM or GM-free markets.
- Delivering this outcome is a challenge, but one which key industry organisations believe is worth striving for.
- The industry has another 18 months to develop appropriate systems and prove that it can self-regulate.
- The grain industry organisations believe that coexistence offers the best chance for the industry to stay internationally competitive.