

Questions & Answers on licence DIR 129 – Field trial of genetically modified (GM) sugarcane

What does this licence allow?

The Sugar Research Australia Ltd has received approval to trial, under limited and controlled conditions, sugarcane plants that have been genetically modified for herbicide tolerance. The field trial may take place in Queensland between November 2015 and November 2021 on a collective maximum area of 30 hectares per year.

What is the purpose of the trial?

The purpose of the field trial is to evaluate the field performance of the GM sugarcane. The proposed trial will continue the work done in the last five years by SRA under licence DIR 096. The GM sugarcane is not permitted for use in human food or animal feed.

How has the GM sugarcane been modified?

The GM sugarcane has been modified for herbicide tolerance. Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) has regulatory responsibility for the use of agricultural chemicals, including herbicides and insecticidal products, in Australia. Dealings conducted under this licence will also be subject to regulation by APVMA.

What controls have been proposed for this release?

The Risk Assessment and Risk Management Plan (RARMP) for this application concludes that the proposed release poses negligible risks to people or the environment. However, a range of licence conditions would limit the size, locations and duration of the release, as well as restrict the spread and persistence of the GM sugarcane, and the introduced genetic material. Control measures include conditions to isolate trial sites from other sugarcane crops, to securely transport and storage of the GM plant materials, and to inspect all trial sites post-harvest for volunteer sugarcane to ensure all GM plants are destroyed.

Want more information?

A number of documents relating to this decision are available on the [DIR 129 page](#) of the OGTR website or via Freecall 1800 181 030. These documents include the finalised RARMP, a summary of the RARMP and the licence.

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