

Questions & Answers on licence DIR 150 – field trial of genetically modified (GM) potato

What does this licence allow?

The Queensland University of Technology has received approval from the Gene Technology Regulator to trial, under limited and controlled conditions, potato plants that have been genetically modified for disease resistance. The field trial is permitted to take place at one site of up to 0.1 hectares in Redland City, Queensland, for a period of two years.

How have the GM potatoes been modified?

The GM potato plants will each contain between one and three introduced genes for resistance to the diseases Potato virus X or potato late blight. The introduced genes are derived from either domesticated potato or a related species of wild potato.

What is the purpose of the trial?

The purpose of the field trial is to assess the agronomic characteristics and Potato virus X disease response of the GM potato plants under field conditions. The GM potatoes will not be permitted to enter human food or animal feed.

What controls are imposed on this release?

The Risk Assessment and Risk Management Plan (RARMP) for this application concluded that the proposed release poses negligible risks to people or the environment. However, a range of licence conditions will limit the size, location and duration of the release, as well as restrict the spread and persistence of the GM potato and the introduced genetic material. These include conditions to restrict pollen flow by deflowering the GM plants, ensure secure transport and storage of the GMOs, and at the end of the trial, monitor the site for at least two years to ensure all GM plants have been destroyed. A full list of the control measures is detailed in the licence.

Want more information?

A number of documents relating to this decision are available on the [DIR 150 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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