

## **Questions & Answers on licence DIR 155 – Commercial release of genetically modified canola**

### **What does this licence allow?**

The Gene Technology Regulator has issued a licence to Nuseed Pty Ltd that permits commercial cultivation of canola known as DHA canola. This canola is genetically modified (GM) for altered omega-3 oil content. The GM canola and its products can enter general commerce, including use in human food or animal feed.

### **What other regulatory approvals are required?**

Food Standards Australia New Zealand has approved the use of material derived from the GM canola as food.

### **Where will this canola be grown?**

Farmers may grow the GM canola anywhere in Australia, subject to restrictions in some Australian States and Territories for marketing reasons. Currently, the states of Victoria, New South Wales, Western Australia and Queensland permit commercial cultivation of GM canola licensed by the Regulator, but the other canola growing states of South Australia and Tasmania prohibit GM canola crops. Further information can be obtained from the relevant State or Territory.

### **How has the GM canola been modified?**

The GM canola contains seven introduced genes involved in fatty acid biosynthesis. The seven genes are sourced from yeast and marine microalgae and encode enzymes that help the GM canola accumulate a high proportion of docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) relative to other fatty acids in the seed oil. Long chain fatty acids such as DHA, which are widely used as a human dietary supplement, are normally sourced from wild-caught fish oils and algal oils.

The GM canola also contains a selectable marker gene from a soil bacterium. This gene confers tolerance to glufosinate herbicide, and was used during plant transformation to select for genetically modified plant cells in the laboratory.

### **What controls have been imposed for this GM canola?**

The licence is for an ongoing commercial release. The Regulator has not imposed any specific measures to manage risk, as the risk assessment concluded that this release of the GM canola poses negligible risks to the health and safety of people or the environment. However, general conditions have been imposed to ensure that there is ongoing oversight of the release.

### **Want more information?**

A number of documents relating to this decision are available on the [DIR 155 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.

**The Office of the Gene Technology Regulator**  
**Tel: 1800 181 030 E-mail: [ogtr@health.gov.au](mailto:ogtr@health.gov.au)**  
**[OGTR Website](#)**