

Questions & Answers on licence application DIR 175 – commercial release of genetically modified canola

What is this application for?

BASF Australia Ltd (BASF) is seeking approval for commercial cultivation of the genetically modified (GM) canola line MS11. The GM canola contains introduced genes for herbicide tolerance and a hybrid breeding system.

The GM canola is intended for use as a parental line for breeding and seed multiplication. The GM canola and its products would enter general commerce, including use in human food and animal feed.

Where will this GM canola be grown?

The purpose of the proposed release is to allow commercial production of this GM canola in all canola growing areas in Australia, subject to restrictions in some Australian States and Territories for marketing reasons. Commercial canola production occurs mainly in Western Australia, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, with sporadic plantings in Queensland and Tasmania. Currently, the commercial cultivation of GM is prohibited by State law in Tasmania and parts of South Australia.

How has the GM canola been modified?

The GM canola contains three introduced genes derived from common bacteria. Two genes confer male sterility and fertility restoration, which form a hybrid breeding system. The third gene confers tolerance to the herbicide glufosinate. This enables the GM canola plants to grow in the presence of this herbicide, which can be used to control weeds in the GM canola crop.

What is the process for considering this application?

The licence application will be subject to comprehensive, science-based risk analysis. The process includes two rounds of stakeholder consultation. In the first round, the Regulator will seek advice from prescribed experts, agencies and authorities prior to preparing a draft Risk Assessment and Risk Management Plan (RARMP). The RARMP focuses on identifying risks to people and to the environment that may be posed by the commercial release. Following public release of the draft RARMP, submissions will again be sought from stakeholders, this time including the public. The RARMP will then be finalised taking into account submissions received, and inform the Regulator's decision whether or not to issue a licence.

How can I comment on this application?

The RARMP for this application is expected to be released for public comment in **December 2020**. Its release will be advertised in newspapers, and it will be available on the OGTR website along with a range of supporting information. While comment is not being sought from the public at this stage, you can obtain a copy of the full application by contacting the OGTR. Please quote the application number DIR 175. A summary of the application is available on the OGTR website (under '[What's New](#)') or by contacting the OGTR.

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