



Australian Government
Department of Health and Ageing
Office of the Gene Technology Regulator

26 October 2006

DECISION ON ISSUING A LICENCE FOR APPLICATION DIR 066/2006
COMMERCIAL RELEASE OF FIVE HERBICIDE TOLERANT AND/OR
INSECT RESISTANT GM COTTON LINES IN NORTHERN AUSTRALIA

The Gene Technology Regulator (the Regulator) has made a decision to issue a licence in respect of application DIR 066/2006 from Monsanto Australia Ltd. The company has received approval for the unrestricted commercial release of five genetically modified (GM) herbicide tolerant and/or insect resistant cotton lines in *northern* Australia.

These GM cotton lines have previously been approved for commercial release in *southern* Australia. However, their cultivation was restricted to *south* of latitude 22° S due to uncertainty whether insect resistant GM cotton was more likely than non-GM cotton to become a weed in northern Australia.

The decision to issue the licence was made after comprehensive analysis of new research information which addressed this issue and involved extensive consultation on the Risk Assessment and Risk Management Plan (RARMP) with the public, State and Territory governments, Australian Government agencies, the Minister for the Environment and Heritage, the Gene Technology Technical Advisory Committee and all local councils north of latitude 22°S.

As required by the *Gene Technology Act 2000* and corresponding State and Territory legislation, issues relating to the health and safety of people and the protection of the environment raised during the consultation process on this application were considered in finalising the RARMP and in making the decision to issue the licence.

The Executive Summary, Technical Summary, and complete finalised RARMP, together with the licence conditions, a set of Questions and Answers on this decision and a link to a document outlining potential cotton growing areas in northern Australia can be obtained on-line from the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator's website or requested via the contacts detailed below.

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