



9 May 2013

INVITATION TO COMMENT ON GENETICALLY MODIFIED SAFFLOWER FIELD TRIAL

Australia's gene technology regulatory system is designed to protect the health and safety of people and the environment by identifying risks posed by, or as a result of, gene technology and managing those risks.

The Gene Technology Regulator is currently assessing Licence Application DIR 121 from the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation for a limited and controlled release of up to 190 lines of safflower that have been genetically modified for altered oil profile.

The primary purpose of the field trial is to evaluate the agronomic performance of the GM safflower under field conditions. The trial is proposed to take place over three growing seasons between September 2013 and March 2016. The GM safflower would be grown only in the ACT in the first season, and in the ACT, in Wagga Wagga in NSW, and near Narrabri in NSW in the second and third seasons. A maximum area of 1 hectare per season would be grown in each locality. The GM safflower would not be permitted in human food or animal feed.

A consultation Risk Assessment and Risk Management Plan (RARMP) has been prepared, which concludes that the proposed release would pose negligible risk to human health and safety or to the environment. A range of draft licence conditions would limit the size, locations and duration of the release, as well as restrict the spread and persistence of the GMOs and the introduced genetic material.

The Regulator welcomes written submissions in order to finalise the RARMP, which will then form the basis of a decision on whether or not to issue the licence. The consultation RARMP and related documents can be obtained from the OGTR website under 'What's New' or by contacting the Office. Please quote application DIR 121 in any correspondence.

Submissions should be received by close of business on **20 June 2013**.

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