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## South Australian Upper House fails state's farmers and scientists

**27 November 2019 (Canberra)** – The Legislative Council's disallowance of the South Australian Government's regulations enabling GM crop cultivation on mainland South Australia is a serious blow to the state's science and farming sectors.

Some supporters of the disallowance indicated they did so because they didn't like the process the government used. This seems like a shallow and weak excuse.

Minister Whetstone actually adhered to the specific process of Labor's own legislation to seek to enable farmer access to GM crops. This process enforced the most extensive community consultation obligations on the government. Through the process, the majority of people supported the GM ban to be lifted on mainland South Australia.

The South Australian Labor Party should be embarrassed that they have voted against a process which was introduced in their own legislation in 2004. They should be further ashamed that they have shown themselves not to be a party of science.

It is nothing short of ridiculous that in this time of drought and climate change, Labor and SA-BEST have decided to deny farmers access to a crucial ag-biotech tool to assist in meeting these challenges and let farmers become even more environmentally sustainable.

The Greens, SA-BEST and Labor have chosen to play politics rather than listen to the calls of scientists and farmers and improve the sustainability and profitability of their own agricultural sector.

The most important lesson for parties that lose government to learn is that outdated, flawed policy positions must be reassessed. Access to GM crops for South Australian farmers is one of those issues. The South Australian Labor Party must update their position on agriculture if they are to be considered as a genuine alternative government.

Mark Parnell has shown himself to be the agricultural equivalent of a climate change denier by stopping South Australia's farmers from accessing tools to make themselves more environmentally sustainable and reduce their carbon footprint. It's also disappointing that during the debate he chose to discredit and disregard South Australia's leading scientists in this field and instead peddle the tired old international activists' line.

Labor and SA-BEST should reconsider their position, listen to farmers and scientists and work with the government to enable this important policy to be introduced at this critical time so that South Australia does not become an agricultural backwater.

CropLife Australia, our members and the plant science industry as a whole remain committed to working constructively with South Australian Parliamentarians to achieve a better policy framework to ensure the South Australian farming and scientific sectors continue to thrive.

**Statement attributable to: Matthew Cossey, Chief Executive Officer, CropLife Australia**

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### About CropLife Australia

CropLife Australia is the national peak industry organisation representing the plant science sector in Australia. CropLife's members are the world-leading innovators, developers, manufacturers and formulators of crop protection and crop biotechnology products. The plant science industry, worth more than \$20 billion a year to Australian agricultural production, provides products to protect crops against pests, weeds and diseases, as well as developing crop biotechnologies key to the nation's agricultural productivity, profitability and sustainability. CropLife is part of the plant science industry's 91 country international federation.