

Groundhog Day for agricultural technology in South Australia

4 March 2020 (Canberra) – For the third time the South Australian Upper House has denied the state’s farmers access to GM crops by disallowing the South Australian Government’s regulations to enable GM crop cultivation on mainland South Australia. This follows the first disallowance of the regulations in November 2019 and the voting down of a repeal Bill in December 2019.

Chief Executive Officer of CropLife Australia, Matthew Cossey, said, “It is very disappointing that, once again, fearmongering with no base in facts has prevailed in South Australia. The South Australian Parliament keeps ignoring the pleas of scientists and farmers to modernise and improve the sustainability of South Australia’s agricultural sector.

“Disallowing the Regulations today was an exercise in senselessness. The arguments raised by opponents of GM technology have been proven time and time again to be hollow and without foundation.

“In every other mainland state of Australia farmers can make the choice to grow GM crops safely and sustainably, and they’ve been doing so for years without issue. Denying South Australian farmers that same choice on the basis of irrational disproven arguments is frankly ludicrous.

“This is no longer an academic or theoretical debate. The reality that the moratorium is not required has been proven across Australia and the world for more than 20 years.

“The SA Upper House needs to listen to the experts that are scientists, farmers and grain-handlers. GM crops are enabling farmers to reduce carbon emissions, use pesticides more sustainably and protect the soil through no-till farming. Farmers and grain-handlers have achieved successful co-existence, storage and export for decades.”

Mr Cossey concluded, “Repealing the GM crop moratorium on mainland South Australia is not a great leap of faith, it is simply the right thing to do, giving farmers a choice to grow whichever approved crops – including GM crops – they want to grow.”

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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.