

Notes from Kim Chance meeting 4th Nov 2005 from 1000-1110 hours

Present: Kim Chance, Bill Crabtree, Alan Robson, John Snooke and Mike McMullen.

By Bill Crabtree

- Alan referred to numerous studies showing the safety of GM products, including some UWA work with Basta resistant lupins. Alan said there were many studies that showed GM products to be safe. Alan said many of the foods we eat, and medicines we take, are now GM.
- Alan said that mutagenesis has been used for decades with no side effects - despite unknown and likely dramatic changes to the DNA of plants. GM is comparatively precise and known.
- Kim said he was still concerned about safety issues with GM and wanted to see scientific trial data. Bill said he had emailed details of many scientific studies after the previous June meeting at Kim's request. See email sent 5:32 pm on 2nd July 2005. Bill agreed to send them again and he said that over 60 million Euro had been spent on GM studies in the EU. See extensive EU report that Bill previously emailed Kim:

[follow up info http://www.agbioworld.org/biotech-info/articles/biotech-art/gen_safety.html. and emailed There are **hundreds of scientific studies** showing short and long-term safety with GMs.

www.monsanto.com/monsanto/content/sci_tech/literature/techpubs/Safety/AnimalFeedPerform05.pdf. The EU research commissioner says ".....GMO safety research has been supported in successive Framework Programmes from 1985 to the present day. The pattern of development of this support is illustrated in the table below, which shows that over this **15-year period 81 projects have been supported**. These projects have involved over **400 teams from many different disciplines** and represent a combined Community financial contribution of **about €70 million**." See <http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/quality-of-life/gmo/>

- Alan said there are many exciting new technologies that CSIRO and others have that are near ready to be released. There will be acid tolerant barley and many health beneficial products in crops, including healthy oils in canola. Bill said there is concern from scientists that there is no path to market which is in great contrast to North and South America, China and India. All these countries are going full-steam!
- John said that there is a growing number of farmers that are keen to have access to biotechnology and that group Producers Forum had formed a WA chapter to progress this.
- Mike said that there was a 50% market access barrier to GM canola. Bill corrected this saying that there was a 10% of volume market access barrier, being one market only - the EU. Bill said that they offer no premium for our non-GM canola. The EU are interested in our canola only 2 years in 5.
- Kim acknowledged that Argentina was almost totally GM soya, and Brasil is now getting close to this also and they are experiencing excellent weed control with these crops.
- Bill said that Canadian farmers can grow HOLLi canola oils (high oleic, low linolenic) with a \$CA50/t premium and they yield similar to their GM canolas. However, Canadian farmers are not willing to grow them as they have no GM herbicide resistant traits - they will soon be GMed as a result of farmer desire.
- Bill said that Dr Bruce Murray (Sept speaker and canola breeder) taught him that TT canola yielded 20-30% less than conventional lines - so farmers abandoned it.
- Kim suggested that legal liability was still a concern even with limits of AP being set. Bill suggested that with Ministerial approval there would be no problem as courts would not go against governments rulings. Kim said that puts more responsibility on governments to be sure they get it right. Kim said that common law would not be adequate to handle GM admixture. Bill gave Kim the executive summary of the Acil Tasman report: **Managing genetically modified crops in Australia**, GM crops, segregation and liability in Australian agriculture - Kim did not believe they have sufficient law knowledge on this issue.
- Kim said that that the WA high level GM advisory committee will be set in about a months time. Kim agreed that the purpose of the committee was to progress GM commercialisation. Bill gave Kim a copy of Qld co-existence framework draft document. Bill hoped the committee would not be a tool to stall GMs.
- Bill said that the Esperance community were keen to begin GM canola growing and they would likely be seeking ministerial approval for such within a month. Kim thought it was unlikely that this would happen for 2006, more likely in 2007.
- Bill asked about other possible GM canola trial work and suggested that AFFA or WADA would be good groups to fund such work. Kim and Alan agreed that it would be good not to have the multinational companies conducting the research/demonstration.
- Bill said that he was planning, with Producers Forum WA, to hold another series of meetings throughout the state on 13th and 14th February 2006.