

Bob should visit average Canadian farmer

GM canola in Canada is not being stockpiled (page 14 Weekly Times 17th Jan). But, yes, they do have a lot of it. Why would that be? It is because Canadian farmers have a choice, and they chose to grow 85% GM canola. They grow it primarily because it yields really well – being about 75% (in tonnes per hectare) of their wheat yields. And they have no problems selling it globally at no discount to our canola – when you consider basis and drought realities.

GM canola also gives perfect weed control with excellent in-crop knockdown herbicides, it controls herbicide resistant weeds, it enables full stubble retention, they can half their herbicide use, they cultivate less, they use less fuel and they love the benefits of moisture retention with no-tillage which GM canola suits perfectly. It fits their triple bottom line; profit, sustainable and their countryman are approving of it. No one blinks an eye to it in Canada, it is considered safe and smart science – with an 11 year proven track record.

Another excellent attribute of GM canola is that it gives perfect and affordable weed control in a drought. Also, the hybrids, particularly Liberty Link lines, (which would be a new knockdown to our broadacre), have yielded well in their droughts. This contrasts our triazine tolerant varieties. Who can afford to grow 200 kg/ha of canola in Australia?

To top it all off the Canadians are selling their canola oil globally – even into Europe, through the middle east crushers. And soon this will not be needed when the EU opens up to direct seed imports expected before our next harvest.

So why would any sensible person want to keep GM canola out of Australia when it has been a proven beyond all sensible doubt. All Australian farmers should have the right to use the latest technology, and, those in doubt should visit Canada and get the facts from the average Canadian farmer before embarking on a scare campaign.