

## **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ON LICENCE DECISION DIR 077/2007: LIMITED & CONTROLLED RELEASE OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED WHEAT AND BARLEY**

### **What is this licence for?**

The University of Adelaide has obtained approval to trial, under limited and controlled conditions, approximately 30 wheat and barley lines that have been genetically modified (GM). The release is proposed take place at one site in the local government area of Marion, South Australia, on a maximum total area of 400 m<sup>2</sup> between June 2008 and June 2009.

### **What is the purpose of the trial?**

The aim of the trial is to assess the agronomic performance of the GM wheat and barley lines under field conditions and to conduct experiments to measure the expression and effectiveness of the introduced genes.

### **How have the GM wheat and barley lines been modified?**

The GM wheat and barley lines contain genes derived from either wheat or barley that are intended to enhance tolerance to different environmental stressors or to increase the levels of a dietary fibre.

All of the GM wheat and barley lines contain an antibiotic resistance selectable marker gene derived from a common gut bacterium. Some of the GM barley lines also contain a selectable marker gene derived from a common soil bacterium. These genes were used during the initial development of the GM plants in the laboratory.

### **What are the effects of the genetic modification?**

The expression of the introduced genes is expected to increase the tolerance of the GM wheat and barley lines to different environmental stressors, including high soil boron levels or drought, or to increase the levels of a dietary fibre called beta glucan.

### **What controls have been imposed on this release?**

The finalised Risk Assessment and Risk Management Plan (RARMP) that was prepared for this limited and controlled release and formed the basis of the Regulator's decision to issue the licence, concluded that the proposed release poses negligible risks to people or the environment. However, a range of licence conditions have been imposed to limit the release to the size, location and duration requested by the applicant as these were important considerations in the evaluation process. Control measures to restrict the spread and persistence of the GMOs and the introduced genes include ensuring that transport and storage of the GM plant materials are in accordance with OGTR guidelines, and monitoring for, and destroying, any wheat or barley plants on the release site for at least twenty four months after final harvest until no volunteers are detected for 6 months. In addition, none of the GM wheat and barley are permitted to be used as human food or animal feed.

### **Want more information?**

A number of documents relating to this decision are available on the OGTR website (<<http://www.ogtr.gov.au>> under "What's new") or via Freecall 1800 181 030. These documents include the finalised RARMP, an Executive Summary, a Technical Summary and a copy of the full licence.