

## **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ON LICENCE DECISION DIR 089 FOR LIMITED & CONTROLLED RELEASE OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED WHITE CLOVER**

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

The Victorian Department of Primary Industries (DPI Victoria) has gained approval to trial, under limited and controlled conditions, one white clover line genetically modified for resistance to Alfalfa mosaic virus (AMV).

The field trial will take place on up to 633 m<sup>2</sup> per year from 2009-11, at one site in the New South Wales local government area of Corowa.

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

The purpose of the trial is to conduct experiments to evaluate the agronomic performance, including seed yield, of the GM white clover line under field conditions. Some seed will be collected and retained for analysis and possible future trials, subject to further approval(s).

AMV causes a disease in white clover which reduces the productivity of white clover pastures. The purpose of investigating resistance to AMV is to improve the productivity of white clover pastures. The GM white clover will not be used for human food or animal feed.

### **How has the GM white clover line been modified?**

The GM white clover line contains a gene from a virus which provides resistance to AMV, as well as an antibiotic resistance gene which was used to identify transformed plants during initial development of the GM plant in the laboratory. This gene was derived from a common gut bacterium.

### **What controls are proposed for this release?**

The Risk Assessment and Risk Management Plan (RARMP) for this application concluded that the proposed release poses negligible risks to people and the environment. However, licence conditions have been imposed to restrict the release to the size, location and duration requested by the applicant as these were important considerations in the assessment process. As well as limits on the scale of the release, control measures have been proposed to restrict the spread and persistence of the GMO and the introduced genetic material. These include ensuring that the GM white clover plants in the field are surrounded by a pollen trap; that transport and storage of the GM plant materials are in accordance with OGTR guidelines; and monitoring for, and destroying, any white clover plants on the release site for at least five years after harvest until no volunteers are detected for at least twelve continuous months. Full details of the licence conditions are available on the OGTR website <<http://www.ogtr.gov.au>> or via Freecall 1800 181 030.