

## **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ON LICENCE DECISION DIR 111 FOR LIMITED & CONTROLLED RELEASE OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED WHEAT AND BARLEY**

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

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) has received approval to trial, under limited and controlled conditions, a range of GM wheat and barley lines that have been genetically modified (GM) for altered grain composition, nutrient utilisation efficiency, disease resistance or stress tolerance. The proposed field trial will take place at one site in the Australian Capital Territory, on a maximum area of 2.3 ha per year between May 2012 and June 2017.

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

The purpose of the trial is to assess the agronomic performance and grain properties of the GM wheat and barley lines grown under field conditions. The GM wheat and barley will not be used in commercial human food or animal feed. However, products derived from the grain of a few GM wheat and barley lines with altered grain composition may be used for a range of carefully controlled small scale animal nutritional trials, and human volunteers may be fed products from some of these GM wheat lines in nutrition trials.

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

The GM wheat and barley lines contain one or more genes or partial genes that are expected to alter grain composition or improve the plants nutrient utilisation efficiency, disease resistance or stress tolerance. The genes are derived from wheat or barley. Most of the GM wheat and barley lines also contain an antibiotic resistance gene or an herbicide tolerance gene that were derived from a common gut bacterium or a soil bacterium, respectively. These selectable marker genes were used to identify genetically modified plants during initial development of the GM plants in the laboratory.

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

The Risk Assessment and Risk Management Plan (RARMP) for this application concluded that the release poses negligible risks to people and 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 assessment process. As well as limits on the scale of the release, control measures have been imposed to restrict the spread and persistence of the GMOs and their introduced genetic material. These include conditions that provide for the secure transport and storage of the GM plant materials, and monitoring the release site for at least two years after final harvest, during which time any volunteer plants found must be destroyed.

### **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.