



Controlling genetically modified (GM) canola on roadsides



- Canola is one of only three GM crops commercially grown in Australia.
- GM canola currently grown in Australia has been developed to tolerate glyphosate herbicides.
- Like any harvested grain, canola accidentally spilled during transport can result in it growing as a weed – for example along roadsides and railways.
- Many weed managers controlling roadside weeds rely on glyphosate, which will be ineffective on glyphosate-tolerant GM canola.
- Unwanted glyphosate-tolerant GM canola can instead be effectively controlled using other herbicides as well as standard, non-chemical weed control measures.

This fact sheet provides information for the control of unwanted herbicide-tolerant GM canola for example along roadsides.

GM glyphosate-tolerant canola is grown commercially in Australia, primarily in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia.

There are also types of GM canola approved for commercial release in Australia that can tolerate the herbicide glufosinate; and a combination of glyphosate and glufosinate. However, these are not currently being grown commercially. For more information, read our [factsheet on GM canola](#).

Like any harvested grain, canola accidentally spilled during transport can result in unwanted growth of canola – for example along roadsides and railways. (These weed plants are sometimes called 'volunteer plants'.)

This roadside canola competes poorly with perennial grasses and other vegetation and rarely persists in large numbers on roadsides in Australia. Some roadside canola may go to seed, resulting in new plants. However, roadside populations are generally

short-lived and are instead perpetuated by new spills each year.

How to manage glyphosate-tolerant GM canola on roadsides

Many weed managers controlling roadside weeds rely on glyphosate herbicides, which will be ineffective on glyphosate-tolerant GM canola. Reliance on glyphosate as the sole weed management option may also contribute to the development of glyphosate-resistant weeds such as annual ryegrass.

Control of glyphosate-tolerant canola can be achieved using integrated weed management practices. Options include:

- a knockdown herbicide other than glyphosate
- mechanical control, such as mowing, slashing or chipping
- an approved tank mix of glyphosate with another herbicide that controls brassica weeds.

These practices will also reduce the development of herbicide resistance in other weeds.

All herbicides must only be used in accordance with the approved label instructions (unless authorised under relevant legislation for specific 'off-label' use). Care should always be taken with herbicide choices to ensure that they will effectively control targeted weeds and are appropriate for the location.

For further information on best practice in weed control visit the following links

- The [Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority](#) is responsible for registering herbicides for use in Australia
- [CropLife Australia](#) is the peak industry body for the oversight of resistance-management strategies

included on crop protection product labels

- The Australian Glyphosate Sustainability Working Group has information on managing herbicide resistance and integrated weed-management practices.

Related factsheets

Genetically modified (GM) crops in Australia

Genetically modified (GM) canola in Australia

Genetically-modified (GM) wheat trials

Stockfeed and genetically modified (GM) crops

Further reading

Genetically modified organisms in Australia

How are genetically modified organisms (GMOs) regulated in Australia?

Version 1	September 2010
Version 2	May 2013
Version 3	June 2018
Version 4	September 2018
Version 5	November 2021

