

Questions & Answers on licence DIR 212 – field trial of genetically modified (GM) canola

What does this licence allow?

The University of Adelaide has been issued a licence to grow GM canola modified for increased photosynthesis and photorespiration. The trial will take place between the date of licence issue and January 2030, on one site with a maximum area of 2 hectares per year. The trial site is located in Light Regional Council in South Australia.

How has the GM canola been modified?

The GM canola contains 3 introduced genes to increase photosynthesis and photorespiration. The genes come from other plants – either from cotton or from a plant that is commonly used as a model plant in research. The genes are expected to increase the yield of the GM canola and may also allow it to perform better under drought stress.

The GM canola also contains 2 selectable marker genes from common bacteria. These genes make the plants resistant to an antibiotic and tolerant to the herbicide glufosinate. These markers were used to select plants during laboratory development of the GM canola. Glufosinate will not be used on the GM canola in the field.

What is the purpose of the trial?

The aim of the field trial is to assess the performance of the GM canola under field conditions. The GM canola grown in this field trial would not be used in human food or animal feed.

What controls are imposed for this release?

The Risk Assessment and Risk Management Plan (RARMP) for this application concludes that the field trial poses negligible risks to people or the environment. However, as this is a field trial, The University of Adelaide must comply with a range of licence conditions that restrict when and where the trial can take place, limit the size of the trial, and stop GM canola from spreading outside the trial. For example, there are conditions to isolate trial sites from other canola crops, to securely transport and store the GM canola, and to inspect the sites at the end of the trial to check that the GM canola is destroyed. Full details of these control measures are in the licence.

Want more information?

A number of documents relating to this decision are available on the [DIR 212](#) page of the OGTR website or via Freecall 1800 181 030. These documents include the finalised Risk Assessment and Risk Management Plan (RARMP), a summary of the RARMP and the licence.

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