

Questions & Answers on licence DIR 215 – field trial of genetically modified (GM) canola

What does this licence allow?

Miruku Australia Pty Ltd has been issued a licence to grow GM canola modified for dairy protein production. The field trial can take place between issue of the licence and December 2029, commencing with up to 1 hectare of planting in 2025 and increasing to a maximum of 20 sites of up to 5 hectares each in 2029. The maximum total planting area is 206 hectares over the 5 years of the trial. The field trial will be conducted at sites in New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia and South Australia.

How has the GM canola been modified?

The GM canola contains introduced genes for dairy protein production. The genes come from cattle and common plant species. The genes are expected to result in canola plants that produce a dairy protein in seeds.

The GM canola also contains an introduced gene for tolerance to the herbicide glufosinate, derived from a common soil bacterium. This gene was used to select plants during laboratory development of the GM canola and does not have any function when plants are grown in the field.

What is the purpose of the trial?

The trial aims to assess the performance of the GM canola under field conditions. The GM canola grown in the field trial will not be used in commercial human food or animal feed. Products derived from GM canola lines with dairy protein production are proposed to be used for human sensory trials under the oversight of a Human Research Ethics Committee.

What controls are imposed for this release?

The consultation Risk Assessment and Risk Management Plan (RARMP) prepared for this application concluded that the field trial poses negligible risks to people or the environment. However, as this is a field trial under limited and controlled conditions, a number of licence conditions have been drafted to restrict when and where the trial can take place, limit the maximum size and number of trial sites, and stop GM canola from spreading outside the trial sites. For example, there are conditions to isolate trial sites from other canola crops or sexually compatible species, to securely transport and store the GMOs, and to inspect the sites at the end of the trial to check that all GM plants are destroyed. Full details of the draft licence conditions are available in the consultation RARMP.

Want more information?

A number of documents relating to this decision are available on the [DIR 215](#) 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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