

Media Information

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AusBiotech welcomes Farm & Food Sector Support for GM Crops

AusBiotech, Australia's peak Biotechnology Industry Organisation, today welcomed the Corish Report into Agriculture and Food Policy, particularly recommendations supporting the development of agricultural biotechnology and calling for a lifting of moratoria on GM crops.

AusBiotech CEO, Dr Anna Lavelle, said the support from the Agriculture and Food Policy Reference Group for agricultural biotechnology and GM crops was all the more powerful because it represented a unified position from producers and manufacturers.

"There is a growing movement among producers, marketers and manufacturers calling on governments to rethink the current moratoria and to allow Australian farmers access to technologies that are being used successfully around the world," Dr Lavelle said.

"This unified voice, is highlighted in the recommendations on agricultural biotechnology made in the Corish Report calling on all governments to facilitate uptake of agrifood biotechnologies.

"We also welcome the Corish Report's recommendation to give higher priorities to the communication of the benefits to the economy, environment and human and animal health that agricultural biotechnology can bring," Dr Lavelle said.

"In August this year, Australia will host ABIC, the premier international agricultural biotechnology conference, which will also provide an excellent showcase for the breadth of technologies and potential benefits in this important sector," she said.

Chair of AusBiotech's AgBio Advisory Group, Dr Ian Edwards, said that the Corish Report highlighted the need for governments to work with industry, producers, marketers and manufacturers to develop a framework for commercialising GM crops.

"What we need now is a clear path forward with reasonable timelines and milestones that would allow for the lifting of GM crop moratoria," Dr Edwards said.

"As outlined in the report, Australia is already falling behind other major markets, in capturing the variety of benefits for farmers and for the Australian population that access to this technology can bring.

"We have a strong regulatory regime, we have a successful history of GM with the cotton crops and now we have unity amongst industry, growers and manufacturers – it is time to work together to move past the rhetoric and produce some clear actions to move the industry forward," he said.

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