

Hon. Tony Burke

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forest

February 21, 2008

Dear Minister,

Please Stop GM Canola Cultivation in Australia

The No! GMO Campaign started in 1996 as a Japanese group of citizens that were alarmed by the many problems associated with genetically modified (GM) food. Our active campaign has the aim to create a GM-free world.

In 2007, it came to our knowledge that five Australian states (New Southern Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and West Australia) - that had previously regulated the cultivation of GM crops under a "GM Moratorium" rule - would see their GM-free status expire in February 2008. If Australia were to allow GM canola cultivation, it would mean Japanese consumers would lose the opportunity to buy GM-free canola imported from Australia.

In August 2007, we sent an urgent letter, requesting that the GM moratorium should be maintained, to the state governors of the above-mentioned five states. Then, in October 2007 we had collected the signatures of 155 Japanese groups, requesting that Australia would maintain its GM moratorium. Their members consist of some 2,900,000 people all over Japan. We also visited Australia, and had the opportunity to hand over this appeal to state government officials, including the state ministers for agriculture in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and West Australia, strongly demanding that the GM moratorium would be maintained.

Regrettably, on November 27, Victoria and New South Wales announced that they would end their GM moratoria. To this we have only one thing to say: We do not need GM food! Our campaign together with Japanese consumer co-operatives, which import GM-free canola from Australia, and other groups sent protest letters to oppose and to reject GM canola.

On the other hand, we were very encouraged in February 2008 as we received the news that South Australia decided to keep its GM moratorium. Indeed, we appreciate this decision very much.

We would like to ask to the Federal Government, on a national level, to firmly maintain a strict GM-free policy. Your country has such a valuable ecosystem, which is unparalleled in the world, so GM crops are a real threat to your country's unique biodiversity. Therefore GM crops should be eliminated, and not accepted.

We strongly request that you make sure not to let GM canola to be cultivated in Australia now or in the future.

Sincerely,

Keisuke Amagasa

Chairperson

No! GMO Campaign

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