****

**Presentation to [ Insert Council District here ] in support of our**

**Regional area remaining a GM-free Crop Zone**

**Why we want our Council to remain a GM-free Crop Zone**

Losing South Australia's state-wide GM-free status and reputation for high quality GM-free food products will disrupt market and trade opportunities for producers and processors all over the state, including those in our council area.

Kangaroo Island farmers worked hard to stay GM-free as they earn big premiums for the island's GM-free grains and beverages, in local and export markets. KI Pure Grain told the Anderson Inquiry,

*“The potential direct cost to KIPG and the KI Grain Growers is the loss of demand for our Non-GM Canola which presently stands at approximately $3,025,000. Additionally, … there is potential to lose further sales of other grains marketed as 'GM Free' which would add to this loss.”*

The Palsystem Consumers' Co-operative Union of Japan's submission noted their strict non-GM policy, so they bought canola and honey exclusively from Kangaroo Island, with annual revenues of $6 million to the Island's economy. They added

*“In order to further develop our economic contribution for both Kangaroo Island and the whole of South Australia, we are currently working on a plan to expand our range and volume of non-GM products, but the extension of the moratorium is critical to this plan.”*

Another GM-free Japanese Consumer Co-operative, Coop Shizenha, which has over 142,000 members said,

*“Our turnover is expected to reach AUD$233 million this fiscal year [2018]” and we “hope that we can contribute further to your economy by purchasing agricultural products cultivated in South Australia and Kangaroo Island as the only remaining Non-GM cultivation area of your country.”*

To boost its case for lifting the GM Crop Moratorium on mainland SA, the Marshall Government commissioned the Anderson Review with short term and narrow Terms of Reference. The report was based on shaky assumptions, excluded relevant information, and ignored inconvenient data. As GeneEthics submission pointed out:

*“Australian non-GM canola has earned premiums in Europe since 2006 and the GM canola discounts continue to be significant. CSIRO team leader Dr Sandra Eady and Australian Export Grains Innovation Centre chief economist Ross Kingwell confirmed that "We've achieved a $100 million per year premium for our farmers, given the extra $20-$40/tonne paid for Australian non-GM Australian canola.”*

In the week ending June 5, 2020, GM canola was discounted $95/tonne in WA compared with non-GM varieties, $39/tonne in Port Melbourne, and up to $39/tonne in rural NSW.

**What we want our council to achieve**

Council has the opportunity to remain a GM-free Zone, despite the Government’s determination to make the whole South Australian mainland into a GM crop area.

We want council to wholeheartedly embrace this process and make its best efforts to marshal the processes and community resources so that a GM-free Crop Zone can be established here.

**How we want our Council to respond**

We ask our council to embrace the opportunity to:

* **consider** retaining our council as a GM-free Crop Zone, as the Government lifted the state's GM Crops Moratorium and put the onus of applying to retain our area as GM-free onto local government;
* **consult** all members of our community, "including persons engaged in primary production activities and food processing or manufacturing activities”, following council's usual practices;
* **gather** evidence of the present and future benefits and costs of remaining GM-free vs the potential benefits and costs of allowing GM crops to be grown in our council - canola and safflower now, but possibly GM wheat, rye-grass, lucerne, etc. in future;
* **apply** to Minister for Primary Industries, Tim Whetstone MP, for the council to remain a GM-free Crop Zone, “an area in which no genetically modified crops may be cultivated”;
* **refute** Anderson report findings on which the government's GM policy is based, in the application, and make the case for the council to remain a GM-free Crop Zone with:
	+ an overview of positive feedback, submissions and evidence that led to council's decision to advocate for a GM-free Crop Zone;
	+ show a marketing advantage for primary producers, food producers and manufacturers from remaining a GM-free Crop Zone;
	+ provide evidence of positive marketing or trade impacts on local businesses from remaining a GM-free Crop Zone.

There are also many compelling health and environmental reasons to avoid GM crops. But it is important to remember that in this process, the only reason the Minister will designate an area as a GM-free Crop Zone is for the preservation of the identity of crops (GM and non-GM) for marketing purposes.

**Please also note that the Minister must receive your application by September 30th so it can be approved and gazetted before the legal deadline.**