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Good yield: Cunderdin farmer David Fulwood watches his first harvest of GM canola.

Picture: Astrid Volzke

## First GM canola shows promise

**SARAH QUINTON**

The first harvest of WA's commercial-sized trials of genetically modified canola began yesterday in an historic event for WA farming.

Cunderdin farmer David Fulwood rolled out the header into his 50ha crop to harvest WA's first tonnes of GM canola.

Mr Fulwood was one of 17 farmers selected to grow the crop patented by seed giant Monsanto.

Mr Fulwood said the experience

was positive, giving him the choice of technology that farmers in NSW and Victoria were already using.

He said the weed control process had been effective and weeds would be even less of a problem next year.

"Overall, the crop has proved itself already," he said. "This is a hybrid variety, giving it a lot of vigour that grew very quickly."

Monsanto canola business manager Tony May said the total harvest for the 17 sites was expected to reach 1275 tonnes.

He said trials in NSW and Victoria showed a 20 per cent increase on yield compared with the non-GM triazin tolerant variety.

Above average yields were expected in WA.

Greenpeace campaigner Louise Sales said 90 per cent of WA's non-GM canola was sold to the European market last year, but Europe would not buy GM canola.

And local food companies such as Goodman Fielder had said they did not want to use GM canola oil.