



Albany Advertiser

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Pioneer looking forward to using 'old' technology

BY KATE MATTHEWS

WOOGENELLUP farmer Mark Adams is one of the 17 WA farmers pioneering the trial of genetically modified canola this year.

All other farmers' names have been kept quiet but the localities and road locations have been made public to ensure transparency.

Mark told the *Great Southern Farmer* at the announcement of trial sites the opportunity would help him compare how the technology performed in his own paddocks and conditions against other canola varieties.

With 50ha of Nuseeds GT 61, Mark said he hoped to start seeding by Anzac Day.

"GM is just another technology that's been around the world for over a decade and our major competitors are using GM," Mark said.

"We've got to remain competitive in Australia and in particularly WA, because we are primarily an exporting State and if we can't do that, we can't continue to do things that are sustainable, such as tree planting," he said.

"It's all about profitability and sustainability and we think the GM technology may help to achieve those goals."

Besides offering a possible way to extend the life of chemicals used by farmers, Mark said the future for GM technology was exciting even to the point where it may

be proved to have health benefits.

To get to the trial stage, Mark had to complete a strict stewardship program which he said would benefit the industry.

And for Mark, the idea of paying royalties, isn't a new concept.

"We grow quite a number of seeds that are well and truly stitched up with patents so we have an obligation to pay royalties on those seeds as we will have with the GM technology so it's not new for us as farmers to be embedded with that," he said.

This year, Mark said GM canola seed would probably retail for between \$9 and \$12/kg, which was around the ball park for non-GM canola.

"In fact, we are growing a hybrid seed which is not genetically modified that we will pay up to \$30 a kilo for, so genetically modified seed at \$9 to \$12 kg could be said to be somewhat cheap for the technology," he said. Mark will also pay an end point royalty of \$12.60 a tonne to Monsanto and licensing of \$3/kg on seed.

As a GM pioneer, Mark said he felt somewhat vulnerable being one of the few in the State to be growing GM canola but congratulated the Government on letting farmers progress with the 'somewhat not new technology'.

"It's been around for a long time and the State needs to understand that. There is lot of GM food consumed around the world and it hasn't done anyone any harm and I am looking forward to the new technology," he said.



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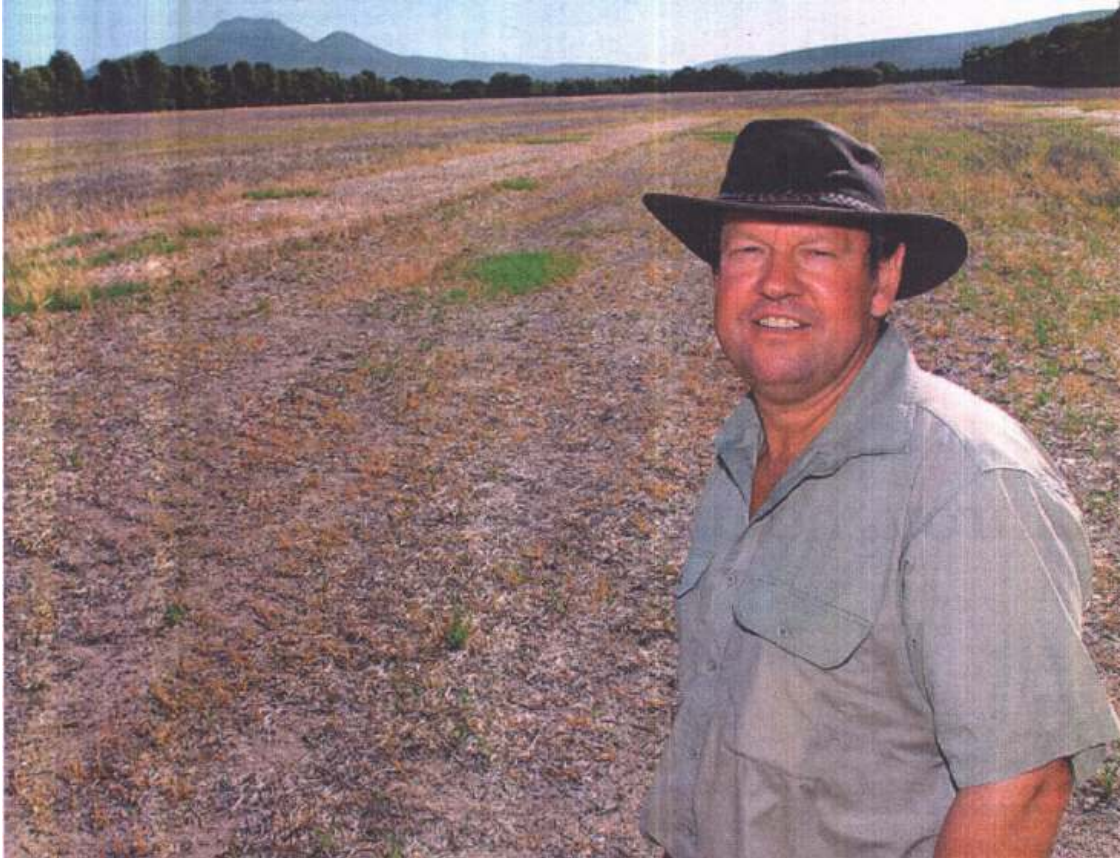
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Woogenellup farmer Mark Adams, on whose property the GM announcements took place, says technology may help growers to achieve greater profits with sustainability.