

South Australia lifts 16-year-old GMO crop cultivation ban after months of political wrangling

South Australia will allow mainland farmers to grow genetically-modified (GM) crops from next season, but councils can apply to remain GM-free.

The change, which comes after the Government made multiple attempts to lift the ban [in 2019], will bring SA in line with the rest of mainland Australia.

Primary Industries Minister Tim Whetstone said he had negotiated in good faith with the Opposition to reach a “workable” outcome. “Today is a positive day for our farmers and regional communities, having that moratorium lifted,” Mr Whetstone said. “This takes away any advantage other states have had and the economic constraints we’ve lived under for the past 16 years.

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Robin Schaefer, the general manager at Bulla Burra farm in Loxton, said the ban being lifted would help to level the playing field. “We are just really keen to see the GM ban lifted so that South Australia can get out of the dark ages,” he said.

“My only concerns is that we don’t end up with hotspots across the state of councils that have GM and that don’t have GM, otherwise that will be really pretty difficult to manage on all fronts.

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