South Australia rejects 11 proposals to ban GM crops, citing 'insufficient evidence' for moratorium

The [South Australian] government passed legislation earlier this year to remove the moratorium on GM crops everywhere except Kangaroo Island.

It gave councils six months to apply to remain GM-Free areas, with 11 applying for such status, mostly across the Adelaide Hills and in regional districts.

However, the government said it had rejected all 11 bids, on the basis of a lack of evidence of any perceived benefits.

"By lifting the GM moratorium everywhere except Kangaroo Island, we are backing our farmers and researchers to grow the state's agriculture sector and create jobs," Primary Industries Minister David Basham said on [November 2].

"The GM Crop Advisory Committee assessed the 11 applications and deemed there wasn't sufficient evidence to recommend designation as an area where no GM food crops can be grown.

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SA's moratorium on GM crops was first imposed by the previous Labor government in 2003.

However, the ban was lifted in May after Labor and the government reached an agreement for new arrangements.

The change also came after the state government last year conducted an independent review that found the GM ban had cost SA's grain growers at least $33 million over the previous 15 years.

Those still supporting the ban said it offered growers an advantage on international markets with local produce promoted as "clean and green".

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