

I am neither producer, nor retailer, wholesaler or exporter. I stand to gain no financial benefit from Tasmania's GMO-free status however I do strongly oppose to the lifting of the moratorium and the release of genetically modified organisms into Tasmania's environment. As a Tasmanian resident and community member who has witnessed the monumental positive change that Tasmania has undergone after embracing its clean, green, natural image I cannot begin to comprehend how any action in favour of lifting the current GMO Moratorium could be seen as a step in the right direction for the state's future. Tasmania has been revitalised on the back of the Brand Tasmania image and approach and the continuation of this is critical to the future of this island state. Without it, Tasmania is nothing but an expensive trip across Bass Strait. The significant work and investment that has gone into the development of Tasmania and its clean, green image has been pivotal in turning around the fortunes of Tasmanian businesses, producers and communities. The growth seen in the agriculture sector is phenomenal with much of it made possible by the GMO Moratorium. Tasmania's export industry is thriving. The Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade report for 2017/2018 showcases the extent, with the value of exports increasing 24.8% to \$5.1 billion. Our major export markets have increased (China up 54.6%, Malaysia up 46.5% and Japan up 50.2%). Removal of our GMO-free status will, in some cases, mark the complete elimination of established export market options from our agricultural producers (including berries and honey) and cannot by any stretch of the imagination be seen as a benefit or a positive exchange to be considered seriously by Tasmania's decision makers. The risk to our industry, our Brand, our export market, our Tourism market, our communities and our people should not be taken lightly. The financial and reputational damage caused to the Tasmanian berry industry over the presence of a mere cluster of fruit fly was colossal with the outbreak having the potential to derail Tasmania's \$200m berry export industry. The decision on whether to maintain or remove a GMO Moratorium should not come down to whose pockets are at greatest risk. Tasmania has been built on the back of Brand Tasmania and clean, green, natural products. GMO organisms have no place in our environment. Tasmania is unique. We have fertile soils, abundant water reserves, a moderate climate and conditions and growing potential that has been described as 'beyond organic'. Consumers are increasingly sourcing organic produce with Tasmania situated perfectly to meet these increasing market needs. The long term sustainable future of our industries are in delivering and developing a clean, natural product and this is where our focus should lie. Not in the short term 'gain' associated with research and growth of GMO's which will do little for our future except serve to reverse our fortunes and the opportunities of the next generation to the sad and sorry state it was just a decade or two ago.