

Question on Notice

No. 1797

Asked on 24 October 2019

MR L MILLAR ASKED MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND FISHERIES (HON M FURNER)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise how the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries intends to ensure that over ten years and \$20m invested in bringing PlantZap to commercialisation is not squandered?

ANSWER:

PlantZap®, a natural replacement for sugar and other sweeteners, was developed by a team of Department of Agriculture and Fisheries' (DAF) researchers and subsequently licensed exclusively to Nutraceutical and Natural Products (NNP), a Swiss company, for commercialisation purposes in May 2012.

On 9 May 2017, a new Licence and Sale Agreement was signed in which NNP agreed to purchase the PlantZap® technology from DAF by no later than 31 July 2018. NNP also agreed that if it failed to purchase the technology by that date, the agreement would automatically terminate.

NNP failed to purchase the PlantZap® technology by 31 July 2018 causing the 2017 Licence and Sale Agreement to automatically terminate.

DAF is now undertaking an Expression of Interest procurement process for the commercialisation of the technology.

DAF has spent considerably less than the figure quoted on PlantZap development and commercialisation.