



CropLinks

THE NEWSLETTER OF CROPLIFE AUSTRALIA

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***Better regulation must
lead to a brighter future***



ALSO INSIDE

The importance of a *Minor Use* program for Australia
CropLife launches counter illegal pesticide campaign
GM crops lead the way in reducing carbon emissions



Matthew Cossey
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From the Chief Executive Officer

Through modern plant science, we can grow Australian agriculture and achieve global food security

Ensuring global food security for the world's growing population is a priority for the plant science industry. Although Australia is capable of producing more than enough food for our own needs, there is now an obligation for all agricultural exporting nations to produce even more, while using fewer natural resources.

With population rising and natural resources diminishing, the pressure on agriculture is ever increasing. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) global farm output must increase by 70 per cent, including a nearly 100 per cent jump in developing countries, to be able to feed the world in 2050. At that time, the population will have risen to 10 billion. Worldwide, the total number of undernourished people in 2010 was estimated at 925 million, higher than it was 40 years ago.

Agriculture lies at the forefront of meeting this challenge and the plant science industry is a critical part of the solution. The industry is developing

innovative crop protection products and GM plant varieties that will enable farmers to grow more food, sustainably and more efficiently. It is critical that Australia's farmers are equipped with all the necessary tools to increase their productivity. Already, 20–40 per cent of the world's food production is lost to pests, weeds and diseases. This number would more than double without effective and modern crop protection products and agricultural biotechnology solutions.

Australia's plant science industry stands ready to play its role in supporting the nation's farming sector to meet the challenges of global food security. A core component to ensuring that the industry continues to do this is by Australia having a world-class and efficient agchem regulatory system, which encourages innovation and investment. That is both the expectation and the requirement for the Federal Government to deliver through its better regulation processes.



Who is CropLife?

CropLife Australia (CropLife) is the peak organisation representing the agricultural chemical and biotechnology industry (plant science sector) in Australia.

CropLife represents the innovators, developers, manufacturers, formulators and registrants of crop protection and agro-biotechnology products.

The plant science industry provides products to protect crops against pests, weeds and diseases, as well as developing crop biotechnologies that are key to the nation's agricultural productivity, sustainability and food security

CropLife is focused on three key areas of modern farming: crop protection (pesticides), crop biotechnology (GM crops) and industry stewardship.

CropLife's members represent 85 per cent of crop protection products and 100 per cent of the technology providers for GM crops in Australia.

CropLife ensures the responsible use of the industry's products through its code of conduct and has set a benchmark for industry stewardship through programs such as **drumMUSTER**, ChemClear® and Agsafe Accreditation and Training.

Facts about Australia's plant science industry

- The plant science industry is worth more than A\$1.5 billion a year to the Australian economy and directly employs thousands of people across the country
- CropLife member companies spend more than A\$13 million a year on stewardship activities, which ensure their products are sustainably managed for the benefit of users, consumers and the environment
- The plant science industry is one of the world's most innovative sectors, with the top 10 companies annually investing an estimated US\$4.72 billion in research and development globally
- Research and development of a single new crop protection product takes more than 10 years with costs of up to US\$250 million
- Pesticides are a key tool for farmers, increasing crop production by up to 50 per cent and ensuring crops are disease free
- In 2009 alone, GM crops saved around 18 billion kg of CO₂ gas emissions — the equivalent of removing 8 million cars from the road
- The use of GM cotton in Australia has reduced the amount of insecticide applied to each hectare of cotton crop by 65–85 per cent and caused yields to increase by 48 per cent between 1998 and 2008.



Better regulation *must* lead to a brighter future

The Federal Government's *Better Regulation of Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals* process must improve agricultural chemical regulation in Australia by enhancing the efficiency of the current system.

This review provides a generational opportunity to establish a world class regulatory system that encourages innovation and ensures that Australia's farming sector has access to the best crop protection products.

An efficient and effective regulator is critical to driving continued product innovation to support Australia's agricultural and plant science industries. In contrast, excessive and unnecessary regulation can hinder and delay introduction of innovative new agricultural chemical tools. Australia's regulatory scheme must provide modern

companies with the framework necessary to continue to provide newer, better targeted and more sustainable products for farmers. Better regulation does not mean more regulation. Australia is a small market and our regulators need to ensure that regulation does not diminish the level of protection from current approaches, meets community expectations of safety and sustainability while minimising and preventing unnecessary regulatory burdens.

An accessible, transparent and predictable system that balances the risk from a product with the regulatory effort associated with managing that risk should result in a regulatory system

that facilitates access to the latest technologies and techniques to drive productivity improvements and better manage health and environmental risks. *Simply put, Australia needs a regulatory system that is efficient, transparent, accountable and predictable.*

Better Regulation reforms need to recognise the effect that regulation has on product availability and cost for Australia's farmers. The government's *Better Regulation* initiative can and should lead to a brighter future for the nation's farming and plant science industries. A system that is modern, efficient and effective will play a key part in delivering these outcomes.

#AGFACT

Without access to modern crop protection products, 20–50% of the world's food supply would be lost annually due to pests, weeds and diseases!

Nothing minor about a *Minor Use* program

The Australian farming sector is being disadvantaged by a lack of access to registered pesticide options for specialty crops or minor uses. This lack of access is not a result of any safety issue, but is a combination of our market size and an unintended consequence of the Australian regulatory system.

Generating all the information needed for an agricultural chemical to pass the regulatory process is very expensive. The information needs to be specific to each crop and for each purpose that the chemical is going to be used. These costs are the same regardless of whether the chemical is going to be used on a million hectares or just one and the same irrespective of how much, or how little, of a product a company may sell.



The Minor Use Program that has been funded by the United States Government for the last 50 years returns over \$500 to the US GDP for every dollar spent.

Accordingly, the crop protection technology provider businesses focus on larger markets where their investment is able to generate a profit. Consequently, many specialty crop farmers have few, or even no options for protecting their crops against disease and pests. This situation is often called 'the minor use problem'.

Minor use registration problems were addressed in the US 50 years ago. The US Government provides the funding needed to generate regulatory information for minor uses. Since then, over 10,000 minor uses have been registered. It is no coincidence that specialty crops represent around half the

value of total US crops, while in Australia they are only around a quarter of the total crop value. Specialty crops, such as exotic fruits, typically fetch higher prices than broadacre crops, so an increase in their production would increase the value of Australian agriculture.

An economic analysis of the US Minor Use Program by Michigan State University found that the return on the US Government investment was huge—every dollar invested returned over \$500 to the US GDP! Now that is stimulus spending!!

Funding a minor use program would also address a key hurdle to a national harmonisation of control of use laws.

One of the biggest differences between pesticide control of use legislations is the different approach that each state government takes to try and overcome the 'minor use' problem. The establishment of a national minor use program would remove most of the need for these different systems in a few short years.

Australia needs to establish a similar program to the US so that our farmers do not continue to be disadvantaged. Farmers need to be properly equipped for the farming challenges of the future and to ensure they are not dissuaded from diversifying.

Don't put your farm at risk with illegal chemicals!

CropLife Australia has launched a targeted public awareness campaign aimed at drawing attention to the dangers of purchasing 'fake' and illegal agricultural chemicals from overseas suppliers.

The trade in counterfeit and illegal crop protection products is a serious threat to agriculture and food safety around the world. The global trade in illegal and counterfeit pesticides is growing, with law enforcement authorities throughout Europe seizing major shipments of illegal products over the last two years. These illegal products originated predominantly from China and India.

There is now growing concern that Australia is also the target of considerable illegal imports of unregistered crop protection products. This is as a result of a 'perfect storm' scenario: an extremely strong Australian dollar, major illegal production (predominantly in Asia), and established transport links and markets for agchem products in Australia. Illegal trade is a significant threat to the agricultural chemical regulatory system and poses an even greater threat to the nation's farming sector.



Don't put your farm at risk with illegal agricultural chemicals

Illegal pesticides endanger agriculture, human health, the environment and the economy. The global trade in illegal and counterfeit pesticides is growing and Australia is at risk.

Illegal pesticides are poor quality, may contain dangerous contaminants and Australian farmers risk being ripped off by products that don't work.

Avoid buying illegal pesticides – keep these tips in mind:

- Only buy products from reputable stores or distributors.
- Avoid internet or email deals from unknown suppliers.
- Never buy pesticides that do not have instructions written in English.
- Ensure the product has a proper registration label that includes an APVMA/NRA approval number.

If you have information relating to the sale of illegal or unregistered pesticide products contact the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority: www.apvma.gov.au.

Australia has one of the world's best plant science industries, delivering high-value and innovative agchem products to Australia's farming sector. CropLife member companies are also global leaders in industry stewardship, by participating in the *drumMUSTER* and ChemClear recycling programs.

Do right by your farm, do right by your local community and do right by Australian agriculture – only purchase legitimate and registered agchem products.

To ensure you are buying legal, registered and genuine products, look to CropLife member companies: Accensi, AgNova Technologies, BASF Australia, Bayer CropScience, Becker Underwood, Chemtura Australia, Dow AgroSciences Australia, DuPont (Australia), Farmoz, FMC Australasia, Monsanto Australia, Nufarm Australia, Sipcam Pacific Australia, Sumitomo Chemical Australia, Syngenta Crop Protection.



www.croplifeaustralia.org.au



Crop Protection

Crop Biotechnology

Industry Stewardship

Do right by your farm, do right by your local community and do right by Australian agriculture – only purchase legitimate and registered agchem products.

Global leaders in industry stewardship

CropLife and its members are global leaders in their full life cycle approach to industry stewardship.

CropLife members adopt and promote ethical and responsible practices from discovery and development of crop protection or biotechnology products, through to their uses and final disposal of associated wastes.

What is the IWRS?

The Industry Waste Reduction Scheme (IWRS) was established in 1999 as a nation-wide joint initiative between CropLife Australia Ltd, the National Farmers' Federation (NFF), Animal Health Alliance (Australia) Ltd, Veterinary Manufacturers and Distributors Association (VMDA) and the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA).

The scheme's programs **drumMUSTER** and ChemClear®, are run by CropLife's not-for profit wholly owned subsidiary Agsafe Limited.

Our programs

drumMUSTER

A national program established in 1999 under the IWRS to collect and recycle empty agvet chemical containers to ensure they do not end up in the local tip. **drumMUSTER** has 753 collection sites servicing 449 local government areas.

To date, there have been 144,194 collections, with 17.24 million containers responsibly disposed of or recycled.



#AGFACT

Since its inception in 1999 drumMUSTER has collected and recycled more than 17 million used chemical containers.

ChemClear®

ChemClear® is a national chemical disposal program established under the IWRS in 2003 to reduce the accumulation of obsolete chemicals stored on properties, rural communities and to assist users maintain good environmental practices.

To date, ChemClear® has collected and disposed of over 254,600 lt/kg of unwanted agvet chemicals.



Patent law that encourages innovation

Let's raise the bar

It is vital for local innovation that Australian patent law establishes the correct balance between encouraging innovation and providing access to that innovation, and as such CropLife welcomed the Federal Government's *Intellectual Property Laws Amendment (Raising the Bar) Bill 2011*.

The Bill incorporates many of the expert recommendations made by the Australian Law Reform Commission, the Australian Centre for Intellectual Property and relevant Senate inquiries. It also makes redundant other potentially disastrous legislative proposals on patent law currently before the Parliament. These now superseded proposals were inferior because they were reactive, discriminatory and would have completely undermined the confidence of Australian research investors.

CropLife's members are dedicated to providing farmers with access to modern, safe and innovative plant science tools.

The crop protection and biotechnology solutions that our members provide require significant private investment, because the costs of bringing these technologies to market are high.

This is why new legislative measures to improve the efficiency of agricultural chemical regulation must include reforms to compensate innovative companies for the dilution in value of IP protection while a product is under regulatory assessment.

The *Raising the Bar Bill* applies a principled approach that is flexible and can be applied to all new technologies. For this reason, it is a far superior piece of legislation that will encourage innovation in Australia.

#AGFACT

A patent expires 20 years after it is granted. It takes an average of 10 years for a pesticide and 13 years for a GM crop to be delivered to market.





GM crops slash the carbon footprint of agriculture

Imagine if you could remove 18 billion kilograms of CO₂ (the equivalent of 8 million cars) from the atmosphere annually, while increasing food production, reducing pesticide use and saving native forests. Well imagine no longer — these were just some of the benefits that occurred as a result of growing GM crops globally!

Much of the discussion around GM crops and climate change focuses on the potential of GM crops to survive drought and other extreme events. While this potential is exciting, the benefits that GM crops are already delivering to the environment should not be overlooked.

GM cotton in Australia has reduced insecticide use by 85 per cent. It has also helped the Australian cotton industry to become the most water efficient cotton industry anywhere in the world.

GM crops that have higher yields and reduced pest damage ease the pressure to convert wilderness areas like the Amazon rainforest into farmland. If GM crops had not been used to produce food, feed and fibre from 1996–2009, farmers would have had

to convert an estimated 75 million additional hectares of other environments to farmland.

With these overwhelming environmental benefits, it is hardly surprising that GM crops have been more rapidly adopted than any other agricultural technology in history.

Climate change predictions indicate that farmers may face even more drought, flooding and excessive temperatures as they are challenged to produce food for an increasing population. The plant science industry plays a key role in mitigating climate change. Through the development of new technologies farmers can achieve higher yields, improve water use efficiency and farm with more sustainable practices.

Through modern farming practices, growers around the world are already saving billions of litres of water and fuel, and preventing billions of tons of greenhouse gas emissions each year. Modern agriculture technologies, while not a silver bullet, have a significant role to play in mitigating climate change and equipping farmers with the tools to keep producing crops in new and changing climates.

GM rice addresses iron deficiency

Iron is vital to the health of humans — it is at the centre of every red blood cell and it is a vital part of many enzymes and other cellular processes.

The recent announcement by the Australian Centre for Plant Functional Genomics that they have successfully created a GM rice with four times normal iron levels is therefore a significant breakthrough.

These crops now need to be trialed in agricultural situations and these are early results, but they are exceptional results that demonstrate how GM technology can deliver simple solutions to major problems.

Plant science industry news in brief

Accensi

Accensi recognised as Ecobiz Partner for Eco-efficiency

Accensi, a leading crop protection manufacturer, embraced the concept of doing more with less so they could reduce annual energy and water usage. The company introduced a staff education program, saving 1.5ML of water. Energy savings of 2.7TJ and 397t greenhouse gas were achieved by changing to a smaller air compressor, optimising materials heating and switching off electrical equipment when not in use. Improved waste and recycle segregation led to a 438m³ waste reduction. Another great example of the plant science industry's commitment to protecting the environment.

AgNova Technologies

Herbicide options for Brussels sprouts

In 2010, AgNova commenced work in Tasmania to develop Baron herbicide as a new active ingredient for the control of brassica weeds in Brussels sprouts, with the result that a permit is now in place and registration applied for. While the cost of efficacy and crop safety trials and registration may never be recovered by AgNova given the small planted area, this addition to the Baron label will provide a valuable option for Brussels sprouts growers.

Agrisearch Services

Agrisearch extends to seed quality testing

Agrisearch announced recently that it has extended its service capability to include seed quality testing. It has been an area that the company has long considered investing in to meet customer needs.

The company's dedicated seed quality laboratories have been established at their existing Wagga Wagga and York facilities to compliment other seed increase and packing activities.

Bayer CropScience

Bayer CropScience recently became a full member of the Sustainable Agriculture Initiative (SAI) Platform Australia Inc., an independent association operating across the agriculture, food and beverage value chain that aims to improve sustainability outcomes.

Richard Dickmann from Bayer said the SAI Platform's sustainability approach fits perfectly with Bayer's focus on the three pillars of sustainable development: economic and social responsibility and environmental protection.

"We're looking forward to working with the SAI Platform members to explore projects that can contribute positively to the sustainability of Australian agriculture," Mr Dickmann said.

Becker Underwood



Becker Underwood and NSW DPI join forces

Becker Underwood has been collaborating with the NSW Department of Primary Industries to introduce novel beneficial biologicals into an Integrated Pest Management framework combating the western flower thrips (*Frankliniella occidentalis*). This collaboration aims to provide new biological control solutions to complement existing management options.

Chemtura Australia

New crop registrations on the horizon for IPM friendly Acramite

Acramite is a mainstay in mite control for stone and pome fruit production. It is widely regarded as an ideal IPM product because of its low impact on insect predators.

Recognising the potential of the technology, Chemtura has been working on registrations in certain vegetable and tree crops.

"The new registrations will provide growers an effective IPM compatible product. An effective IPM program will result in a more effective use of insecticides which benefits everyone," Chemtura's Technical Manager, Josh Mahoney said.

Dow AgroSciences

Dow AgroSciences joins with HRZ Wheat

Dow AgroSciences Australia recently announced its investment in the Australian wheat breeding company HRZ Wheat.

Dow AgroSciences and HRZ will exchange wheat germplasm, and HRZ will gain access to advanced breeding tools, technologies and funding to help accelerate delivery of superior wheat varieties to Australian farmers.

The alliance will increase breeding efficiency, shortening the time it takes to get novel products to market.



Above (L-R): Richard Chambers (Dow AgroSciences), Jackie Wraight, Richard Richards, Lindsay Adler (CSIRO) and Andreas Betzner (GRDC)

DuPont (Australia)

DuPont Global biotech innovator provides insight into CSIRO review

DuPont biotechnology expert and global business development manager, DuPont Biomaterials, Dr Ray Miller, visited Australia in September to participate in the CSIRO's review of its industrial bio-based economy strategy.

Based in the USA, Dr Miller is highly regarded as an expert in bio-based product innovation and developed the process that would eventually deliver DuPont's growing portfolio of biobased materials. His insights will assist the CSIRO in providing science based advice to government.

Farmoz

Farmoz asks resellers to join in national prostate cancer fight

Resellers across Australia were invited to contribute to the national fight against prostate cancer by hosting fund-raising barbecues during September.

Farmoz once again partnered with the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia and resellers to host the events and offered 20 Weber barbecues and other items as an added incentive to farmers and their communities to take part.



Above: Adam Phelan of Farmoz with one of the Weber barbecue prize packs.

Monsanto Australia

Monsanto has partnered with BeeMart to develop Bel Oro™. The bright yellow super-sweet Bel Oro™ fruit is a melon that delivers a consistent burst of flavour with exceptional shelf life and internal quality. Keep an eye out for Bel Oro™ at a greengrocer near you!



Nufarm Australia

Nufarm thinks inside the box

Nufarm has launched its revolutionary QuikPour chemical container to the Australian market. QuikPour, released in July, is the result of more than four years of research and development.



Syngenta Crop Protection Syngenta learning centres offer a window into the future

A record number of growers and advisors have seen a window into the future at Syngenta's Learning Centres this spring — with a wide range of innovative trials showing how Syngenta is looking to integrate leading crop protection, seed care, seed and adjacent technologies into crop solutions able to deliver new levels of productivity and performance on Australian farms.



Syngenta's James Considine presents to a group of leading growers at Syngenta's Elmore Learning Centre (Victoria)

#AGFACT

On Twitter, there is a designated hashtag for all agricultural and rural discussions called #AgChatOZ? #AgChatOZ also hosts weekly discussions on Tuesday evenings at 8 pm AEDST.



Tweet Tweet CropLife joins ABC Landline discussion on the future of food

CropLife Australia's CEO Matthew Cossey recently participated as an official guest on the ABC Landline live Twitter forum as part of the program's feature on *The future of food*.

The forum generated some interesting and significant discussion on the benefits of adopting genetically modified tools for Australia's farmers and world food production.





Crop Protection

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Industry Stewardship

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