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## APVMA delays hurting farmers when they can least afford it

**Wednesday 1 April 2026** - The most recent performance results of the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority raise serious questions of the Regulator's ability to even meet the minimum standards expected by the nation's farming and plant science sector and stipulated by law.

The results for the December 2025 quarter, that have only just been released, show the APVMA's performance across all applications continues to fall. Critically, the on-time assessment of new and innovative products and uses has plummeted to their worst level since June 2017. With only 36 per cent of applications being completed within statutory timeframe requirements, two in three applications are now running overtime.

Matthew Cossey, CEO of CropLife Australia, says "The results are as bad as they have been since the former government moved the APVMA to Armidale.

While the government has been working to improve the regulator's performance, the persistence of poor performance continues to cripple farmers in accessing new technologies that deliver enhanced productivity and sustainability at a time when we need it more urgently than ever."

The Government's productivity agenda – and its recent focus on delivering an innovative Australian private sector that will lead future economic growth – is in complete contrast to the performance of its regulator. The APVMA delays are themselves serving as a productivity handbrake on Australia's farming sector.

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### About CropLife Australia

CropLife Australia is the national peak industry organisation representing the plant science sector in Australia. CropLife's members are the world-leading innovators, developers, manufacturers and formulators of crop protection and crop biotechnology products. The plant science industry, worth more than \$31.6 billion a year to Australian agricultural production, provides products to protect crops against pests, weeds and diseases, as well as developing crop biotechnologies key to the nation's agricultural productivity, profitability and sustainability. CropLife is a part of the plant science industry's 91 country international federation.



“Mr Cossey continued, “With the shadow of the current global energy crisis looming over all agricultural supply chains, these unnecessary regulatory delays are something that Australia’s farmers should not have to tolerate. More than ever, our farmers need faster access to new technologies and products that enable improved productivity and sustainability. Importantly, these will enable downward pressure on food production costs. With pesticides essential to the commercial growing of almost all of Australia’s fruit and vegetables, these delays create another production risk to farmers. The flow on will ultimately be felt by Australian families at the check-out.

The plant science industry already incurs some of the highest regulatory costs in the world in fees and levies for the APVMA. The Government should be ensuring, in both performance and cost, that the APVMA’s operations do not disincentivise the plant science industry from doing business in Australia and providing Australia’s farmers with the latest crop protection innovations”, said Mr Cossey.

Mr Cossey said, “While we acknowledge the APVMA has been undertaking significant internal reform over the past two years, the question now for the APVMA is: when will it get back to hitting the minimum performance targets that are set out in its statutory timeframes? Farmers are facing enough challenges at the moment. An immediate improvement in on-time product assessment is needed more than anything else,” concluded Mr Cossey.

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**Contact:** Penny Fischer | 0411 110 675 | [penelope.fischer@croplife.org.au](mailto:penelope.fischer@croplife.org.au)

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