

AUSTRALIA'S PLANT SCIENCE INDUSTRY CONTINUES ITS WORLD LEADING COMMITMENT TO STEWARDSHIP

2 August 2012 (Canberra) – Australia's plant science industry's global leadership in stewardship has been highlighted again with the release today of an independent survey report concluding that the **drumMUSTER** program is one of the most successful of its type anywhere in the world.

CropLife Australia, Chief Executive Officer, Matthew Cossey commented today, "The success of the **drumMUSTER** stewardship program is testament to the long-term forward thinking and commitment of Australia's agricultural chemical companies to environment & industry stewardship".

CropLife Australia's wholly owned subsidiary, Agsafe, runs the **drumMUSTER** program as part of the Industry Waste Reduction Scheme (IWRS). The IWRS is facilitated through a joint venture between CropLife Australia, National Farmers Federation, Animal Health Alliance Australia, Veterinary Manufacturers and Distributors Association the Australian Local Government Association.

The program has been responsible for over 2 million farm chemical containers being returned through the **drumMUSTER** program in 2011 alone. This represents a 10 per cent increase in the total weight of containers recycled compared with 2009 when the independent survey was last carried out.

Mr Cossey said, "reducing the environmental impact of farming and encouraging and facilitating farmers to be more environmentally conscious is an incredibly important part of ensuring the sustainability of Australian agriculture.

"I am very proud of the leadership and cooperation shown by our industry in initiating this program more than a decade ago and I am thrilled by the participation of so many farmers across the country. This type of good corporate citizenship should be celebrated and supported. This is why it is so important that farmers support the program by purchasing products that carry the **drumMUSTER** logo.

"Australia is leading the way in its commitment to industry stewardship in the agchem product sector and the active support from CropLife's member companies has shown how willing the plant science industry is to get behind initiatives that will ensure a more sustainable agricultural industry. CropLife Australia member companies are also very conscious about the amount of packaging entering the system and accordingly have been part of the efforts to innovate the use of returnable and bulk containers for farm chemicals where possible.

"With **drumMUSTER** expected to collect its 20 millionth drum this year, it is evident that the program is continuing its success, success built on CropLife members being prepared to collectively put their money where their mouth is.

"The total volume of waste diverted from landfill since the industry's voluntary stewardship efforts began in 1999 is estimated to be more than 75 per cent, comparing more than favourably with similar stewardship programs around the world. It is important to also remember that this environment and industry stewardship success was not generated by government regulation but through the collective voluntary initiative of industry," concluded Mr Cossey.

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About CropLife Australia

CropLife Australia (CropLife) is the peak industry organisation representing the agricultural chemical and biotechnology (plant science) sector in Australia. CropLife represents the innovators, developers, manufacturers and formulators of crop protection and agricultural 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. The plant science industry is worth more than \$1.5 billion a year to the Australian economy and directly employs thousands of people across the country.

CropLife and its members are committed to the stewardship of their products throughout their lifecycle and to ensuring that human health, environment and trade issues associated with agricultural chemical use in Australia are responsibly and sustainably managed. Our member companies spend more than \$13 million a year on stewardship activities to ensure the safe and effective use of their products. CropLife ensures the responsible use of these products through its mandatory industry code of conduct and has set a benchmark for industry stewardship through programs such as **drumMUSTER**, ChemClear® and Agsafe Accreditation and Training. Our stewardship activities demonstrate our commitment to managing the impacts associated with container waste and unwanted chemicals.

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