

INTERNATIONAL REPORT CONFIRMS BENEFITS AND IMPORTANCE OF GM CROPS TO AGRICULTURE

25 May 2012 (Canberra) – Farmers who grow GM crops continue to see significant economic and productivity gains, as well as improved incomes and reduced risk for their businesses, the latest annual report from PG Economics reveals.

CropLife Australia's Chief Executive Officer, Matthew Cossey said today "Australian GM cotton and GM canola farmers have realised farm income benefits of more than \$400 million over the 15 year period covered by the report.

"These significant benefits confirm that it is absolutely critical for Australian farmers to have access to all the available technologies in order to increase the productivity and environmental sustainability of their farming enterprises.

"This report gives yet another clear indication that GM crops are proving to be a critical tool for farmers globally as the need to meet food security demands in the face of global economic uncertainty and a changing climate intensifies.

"The report's findings indicate that if crop biotechnology had not been available to the 15.4 million farmers using it in 2010, maintaining global food production would have required extra plantings equivalent to 8.6% of the arable land in the United States."

In 2010, the net economic benefit at the farm level from growing GM crops was \$14 billion; and the environmental benefit resulting from less fuel use and increased soil carbon storage was equivalent to removing 19.4 billion kg of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, or equal to removing 8.6 million cars from the road for one year.

CropLife Australia strongly endorse the Director of PG Economics and report co-author, Graham Brookes' comments that the environment is benefitting from farmers using more benign herbicides or replacing insecticide use with insect resistant GM crops. The reduction in pesticide spraying and the switch to no-till cropping systems is also resulting in reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

GM crops continue to make an important contribution to the development of crop production systems that require fewer pesticide applications, reduce the risks of crop losses due to insects and weeds and increase the gross margin for all types of farmers in both developed and developing countries.

The full report from PG Economics can be downloaded from:

<http://www.pgeconomics.co.uk/pdf/2012globalimpactstudyfinal.pdf>

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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, ChemClea® and Agsafe Accreditation and Training. Our stewardship activities demonstrate our commitment to managing the impacts associated with container waste and unwanted chemicals.

