

PLANT SCIENCE KEEPING FOOD ON OUR PLATES, BEER IN OUR GLASSES AND MONEY IN THE NATION'S COFFERS, STUDY SHOWS

Study confirms the importance of crop protection products for Australia's farming sector

Thursday 21 November (Canberra) – A landmark report released today has revealed that Australian production of hops, carrots, peanuts, onions, grapes and a number of other crucial food crops would be commercially unviable without the safe use of approved crop protection products.

The Deloitte Access Economics report was commissioned by CropLife Australia.

“Very few consumers understand where their food and drink comes from, or the energy and resources that go into putting a meal on their plates. It's easy to ignore the challenges hops has overcome to make it into your beer, or what might have prevented the onion on your burger from making its way to your plate,” said Matthew Cossey, CEO of CropLife Australia today.

“Imagine if more than two thirds of the crops Australian farmers currently harvest were lost every year. Imagine how sparse the local fruit and vegetables would be on our supermarket shelves. How much fresh produce would make it to our plates? How much would we have to pay for it?”

The Deloitte Access Economics report shows that 68 per cent of the total value of Australian crop production, or \$17.6 billion of Australian agricultural output, can be attributed to the use of crop protection products.

The report also reveals that the crop protection product sector creates 9,250 full time equivalent jobs across Australia.

“Our report highlights the multiple contributions the crop protection industry makes to the economy in areas including employment, exports, manufacturing and trade,” said Deloitte Access Economics Partner Steve Brown.

The report complements the findings of a number of international studies. One such study recently conducted in the US by economist Mark Goodwin indicated that crop protection products provide a 48 per cent saving on grocery bills for a family of four in the US.

CropLife's Matthew Cossey said, “This confirms that an Australia without modern, approved, safe agricultural chemistry used by farmers in a responsible manner would be an Australia incapable of commercially producing beer and wine; not to mention an array of fresh, local produce we take for granted every day. Our grocery bills would be almost twice as expensive and the variety of local food to which we'd have access would be alarmingly narrow.

“The federal government has committed to streamlining agricultural chemical regulation and to provide start-up funding to a specialty crops and minor use program, which will facilitate access to chemicals for uses that would otherwise be commercially unviable in the Australian market.

“Investment in R&D and a regulatory system that facilitates innovation in agricultural chemistry will stand Australia in good stead to protect its crops and economy from ever-adapting pests and diseases.

“This report demonstrates the relevance and importance of the initiatives set out in the Coalition's current agriculture policy. It is absolutely vital that Australian farmers have access to the most up-to-date, sustainable agricultural chemical products for the sake of our farmers, our food supply and our economy,” concluded Mr Cossey.

The report can be downloaded in full [here](#).

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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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