



## MEDIA RELEASE

### LONGSTANDING PRINCIPLES OF COEXISTENCE IN FARMING CONFIRMED

**28 May 2014 (Canberra)** – Today's Supreme Court of Western Australia decision in the Marsh v Baxter case reaffirms the foundation of cooperative farming irrespective of farming method and highlights the need for immediate Federal Government action to correlate Australia's unrealistic organic marketing rules with international standards.

This decision emphasises the need for activists to stop creating unnecessary conflict between farmers and for the Australian organic industry to start seriously considering bringing their marketing rules in line with the rest of the world.

"Today's decision is a victory for common-sense and confirms the long standing tradition of coexistence of all farming methods. The decision however reinforces the need for the Federal Government to take urgent action to prevent future unnecessary conflict caused by Australia's flawed organic standards," Matthew Cossey, Chief Executive of CropLife Australia said today.

"We want to ensure that all Australian farmers have a choice to grow any approved crop on their land. No farmer should have to change their farming methods simply because of unreasonable, illogical and internationally inconsistent organic marketing rules.

"That is why CropLife Australia is continuing to work with policy makers and farmer organisations, and welcomes engagement with the organics industry to improve the regulatory framework for farming systems, to prevent unnecessary risk for all farmers and their neighbours.

"We need to make it easier for farmers to get on and do what they do best. The opportunities available for Australian agriculture this century will be wasted if farmers do not have a right to choose which approved crops they grow in a realistic, efficient way.

"We need to do everything we can to ensure that all Australian farmers have access to the same safe, effective tools and technologies as their international competitors. We need to make sure they can access a variety of markets for high quality produce.

"There are groups out there trying to exploit situations for their own political advantage and using our farmers as pawns in an ideological game. We will continue to work hard to ensure that this regrettable situation doesn't occur again so that all farmers, whether they farm using organic, conventional or modern methods, can go on farming in the cooperative manner that has been in place for centuries.

"The solution to prevent this from ever happening again is simple; fix the regulations that have allowed the organic industry in Australia to create self-imposed standards. This is a point from which the agriculture sector can move forward, but now is the time for cooperation, not conflict," 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 \$17.6 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.