



MEDIA RELEASE

IARC DELIVER CONFUSING AND UNCONSTRUCTIVE LIST OF POTENTIAL CARCINOGENS

23 March 2015 (Canberra) – The International Agency for Research on Cancer’s (IARC) decision to list five pesticides as “possible” or “probable” carcinogens contradicts the comprehensive scientific assessment of expert regulators around the world.

The pesticides have been added to a list of substances and activities that includes aloe vera, coffee, pickled vegetables and being a hairdresser or carpenter.

“IARC ratings are based on an incomplete, cherry-picked data review, that has omitted key evidence,” said Matthew Cossey, Chief Executive Officer of CropLife Australia.

“Its conclusion is contrary to the broad consensus reached by numerous respected international regulatory bodies, which carry out extensive, scientific reviews.

“Around the world pesticides are assessed and regulated by expert scientific authorities, such as the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority. The pesticide registration process involves years of data collection and comprehensive assessment before approvals are granted and a product can be sold on the Australian market. The weight of scientific evidence shows that pesticides do not cause cancer.

The IARC results also contradict the Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR) which is an internationally recognized expert body administered jointly by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and IARC’s parent body, the World Health Organization. The JMPR is made up of the world’s foremost toxicology specialists and has also approved the safety of these pesticides.

“A recent study by the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety and University of Sydney found that incidence of cancer is lower in farmers, who have the highest level of exposure to pesticides, than the general population. This study reflects similar findings overseas.

“Given that the IARC have ranked the pesticides in the same categories as coffee and aloe vera, which many of us are exposed to or consume every day, reflects the inadequate and misleading nature of its method of assessment.

“Every agricultural chemical product registered in Australia goes through a thorough scientific, evidence-based risk assessment, which assess any hazards associated with the product and determines the relevant risks to users, consumers and the environment. This process is far more scientifically rigorous than that carried out by the IARC.

“It is important to note that the IARC has not undertaken or considered any new research or data that has not previously been assessed by expert regulators around the world.

“The World Health Organization needs to explain how the IARC is able to reach conclusions that are contrary to countless scientific studies without any additional evidence,” concluded Mr Cossey.

Contact: Jaelle Bajada (Manager – Public Affairs) Ph: 02 6230 6399 Mob: 0410 491 261

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 contribute more than \$13 million a year to 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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