



## MEDIA RELEASE

### AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION PLAYS KEY ROLE IN FEEDING A GROWING POPULATION

**Friday 10 July 2015 (Canberra)** – World Population Day on Saturday 11 July is the time to recognise the enormous task of feeding the world's rapidly growing population. Using modern innovations and technologies, Australian farmers are well positioned to significantly contribute to meeting the challenges of global food security.

"With Australia's population increasing by approximately 1,060 people every day and the UN predicting a global population of nearly 10 billion by 2050, farmers around the world face the tremendous challenge of increasing food production by 70% over thirty years while decreasing their environmental footprint and using limited arable land," said Matthew Cossey, Chief Executive Officer of CropLife Australia.

"CropLife International's recently released [\*2015 Plant Biotechnology Product Pipeline\*](#) showcases new innovations in agricultural biotechnology in development for different crops that could assist Australian farmers to face these challenges"

"The theme of this year's World Population Day 'Vulnerable Populations in Emergencies' highlights the role of agricultural innovation assisting farmers to provide high-quality food, feed and fibre for these populations and the world."

"For rice-dependent populations in developing countries, the availability of Golden Rice, which is currently in the pipeline, could provide sufficient vitamin A to substantially reduce the 6,000 deaths caused every day by vitamin A deficiency. Golden Rice can be grown and harvested under difficult climatic conditions. Not only could it give families an ongoing source of nutritious food; it could also generate a new source of income."

"The Pipeline also includes new herbicide tolerant and insect resistant varieties of cotton which could offer additional options to Australian cotton farmers who already primarily use GM cotton. The adoption of GM cotton in Australia has delivered economic advantages from improved yields and reduced input costs as well as environmental benefits including improving the sustainable use of crop protection products."

"Australian farmers already recognise the economic, agronomic and environmental benefits GM crops provide and will plant more than 436,000 hectares of GM canola in 2015; up from 350,000 in 2014. Farmers could one day have the choice to grow canola with improved nutritional traits for consumers, or increased protein and higher nutrient density for feed."

"A study by the International Food Policy Research Institute profiled 11 different agricultural innovations including crop protection, drip irrigation, heat tolerance, drought tolerance and no-till farming, and found that agricultural technologies could increase global crop yields as much as 67 percent and cut food prices nearly in half by 2050."

"Alarming, 20-40% of the world's food production is lost to pests, weeds and diseases. This number would double without effective crop protection products. In particular, it is estimated that yields of most fruit and vegetables, which are integral to a healthy diet, would fall by 50-95% without the use of fungicides to protect from disease."

"Using a variety of innovative agricultural tools is the only way to achieve sufficient and sustainable crop production for our growing population. It is crucial that Australian farmers continue to have access to plant science innovations to provide them with additional tools for the many challenges and opportunities ahead."

**About World Population Day:** Established by the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme in 1989 as a way to focus attention on the urgency and importance of population issues.

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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.