



MEDIA RELEASE

COMMON SENSE AND TRADITIONAL PRINCIPLES OF COEXISTENCE IN FARMING UPHELD

3 September 2015 (Canberra) – Today's decision of the Supreme Court of Western Australia Court of Appeal in the *Marsh v Baxter* case reaffirms the foundation of cooperative farming, irrespective of farming method, and reinforces the urgent need for Federal Government action to formally clarify Australia's organic marketing rules so that they cannot be warped and misinterpreted for political purposes by activists again.

"Today's decision is yet again a victory for common-sense and reconfirms 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 deliberate misinterpretation of Australia's organic standards by certifiers behaving more like extreme ideological activists," Matthew Cossey, Chief Executive of CropLife Australia said today.

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

"That is why CropLife Australia is continuing to work with policy makers, 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.

"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. CropLife Australia supports the WA Government's plan to clear the way for WA farmers to have access to the same safe, effective tools and technologies as their international competitors.

"Activists need to stop exploiting farmers in their ideological games, creating conflict where there is none, and let farmers get on and do what they do best; growing the affordable, sustainable and quality food, feed and fibre we need for our growing population.

"We will continue to work hard to ensure that the agricultural regulatory environment ensures 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; urgently fix the regulations that have allowed extreme elements in the organic industry in Australia to attempt to enforce their self-imposed third party standards onto others that are completely inconsistent with the standards followed in the rest of the world, including Europe. This is a point from which the agriculture sector can move forward," 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 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.