



## MEDIA RELEASE

### FOCUS ON INNOVATION AND SCIENCE IN AGRICULTURE BENEFITS ALL AUSTRALIANS

**7 December 2015 (Canberra)** – Innovation and science is core to the future success and competitiveness of Australia's agricultural sector and will benefit from the Government's National Innovation and Science Agenda announced today by the Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull MP and the Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, the Hon. Christopher Pyne MP.

"Today's announcement is an important marker in Australia's future economic success and welcomed leadership in the important areas of innovation and science. Australian agriculture and our scientists, researchers and industry are well equipped to meet the challenges that we as a nation will face, with the right support and public policy framework," said Matthew Cossey, Chief Executive Officer of CropLife Australia.

"The Australian plant science industry has been delivering innovation to agriculture for more than 60 years and innovation in agriculture will only become more important for the nation's farming sector in the next 100 years.

"The world's population is predicted to increase to 9.6 billion by 2050, requiring an increase in global food production of 70 per cent. Providing enough food in the context of production constraints, volatile consumption patterns and a changing climate will be an unprecedented challenge that requires innovation from both public and private sectors, and jointly."

"Australian agriculture and its associated industries generate over \$150 billion each year and underpin 12.1 per cent of Australia's GDP. The plant science industry is an integral input driving this performance," said Mr Cossey.

"Innovation from the plant science sector already directly underpins \$18 billion dollars of Australia's agricultural production. Crop protection and agricultural biotechnology solutions assist farmers in producing high yields with fewer natural resources by reducing water consumption, increasing a crop's nutrient uptake and reducing the need for other inputs."

"A truly productive and competitive agriculture sector that can sustainably contribute to food security in Australia and globally requires access to modern farming technologies, including agricultural biotechnology and crop protection products."

"It is also pleasing that the Federal Opposition have shown an equal recognition of the importance and commitment to innovation with their Leader, the Hon. Bill Shorten MP, announcing their Future Smart Australia policy last Friday.

Innovation and science is in the national interest and now is the perfect time for genuine bi-partisan support for this critically important area for Australia's future prosperity," Mr Cossey concluded.

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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.

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