



## MEDIA RELEASE

### LATEST APVMA PERFORMANCE STATISTICS MOST CONCERNING

**9 February 2017 (Canberra)** – The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) performance statistics released today are of deep concern, with the regulator achieving only 50 per cent of work within statutory time frames for crop protection – down a dramatic 32 per cent from last quarter.

“This disappointing performance means farmers will have delayed access to the latest innovative crop protection farming tools, less choice in crop protection products, and will pay more due to the cost impost that these regulatory delays cause. This adds just another hurdle for our farmers being able to compete globally and seriously undermines the plant science industry’s capacity to support the nation’s farming sector,” said Mr Matthew Cossey, Chief Executive Officer of CropLife Australia.

“Australia is fortunate to have an independent, scientifically competent and technically proficient regulator; however, ongoing issues relating to efficiency and operational performance must be addressed as a matter of priority. Having only just recovered from an all time performance low 12 months ago, this fall comes as a real blow to the plant science industry and the nation’s agricultural sector.”

“It is clear that urgent and significant action is required to address the impacts that the proposed relocation of the authority is already having, as well as investment in creating a world-leading next generation regulator that is significantly more efficient.”

“CropLife Australia and the plant science industry welcome public statements by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture, the Hon. Barnaby Joyce, about future significant investment in the APVMA as part of building a centre of excellence for agricultural chemistry based in Armidale. However, that will all be for nothing if in the meantime the regulator’s performance puts Australia’s farmers a generation behind in the essential chemistry for modern farming. It’s important to remember that farmers access of crop protection products directly underpin more than AUD\$18 billion of Australia’s crop production.”

“The challenge in delivering this innovation for farmers is already hard enough. It now takes over 11 years of research and development, requiring the testing of more than 140,000 compounds, costing more than US\$286 million to bring just one new successful crop protection product to the market, and a third of those costs are directly related to regulation.”

“CropLife and its members remain committed to working with the government to achieve their vision regarding the centre of excellence, but the APVMA and the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources need to take urgent action and constructively contribute to solutions and initiatives to address the consequences of relocation and implement genuine regulatory efficiency,” 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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