

MORE FOOD ON THE WORLD'S PLATE THANKS TO PLANT SCIENCE INDUSTRY INNOVATIONS

5 DECEMBER 2018 (Canberra) – The [recently released international report](#) by market analysts Phillips McDougall, shows the significant positive impact crop protection products have had on farming since 1960. Today's crop protection industry is valued at over US\$50 billion globally with more than 600 chemical actives available to farmers worldwide. Here in Australia crop protection products have been established to directly underpin more than A\$20 billion of agricultural production.

While the rate of new product approvals has decreased slightly in recent years, industry investment in research and development remains high. Products continue to be developed to improve their efficacy and ensure the highest levels of safety. This is vital in ensuring they meet regulatory standards, so farmers have the best possible tools to provide nutritious, safe and affordable food to a growing world population.

As products have been improved, application rates have been able to be decreased significantly. In the 1950's farmers were using up to 2,400 grams of active ingredient per hectare to control pests, weeds and diseases. They now need only around 70 grams to treat the same areas, a result of the significant innovations in chemistry through this major investment in research and development over many decades.

The report notes the use of crop protection products helps farmers increase their yields, a trend that must continue for global food security.

Chief Executive Officer of CropLife Australia, Matthew Cossey, said, "Thanks to continued research and development investment by the crop protection sector led by CropLife members, the resulting innovations mean farmers are now applying 95 per cent less pesticide per hectare to achieve the same level of control. Food produced per tonne of active ingredient has increased by more than 10 per cent in the last 40 years. These are extraordinary results for our farmers. Australian farmers have certainly been at the forefront of these benefits."

Regulatory requirements have become more stringent since the 1960s and now involve the development of more data than ever before. To register one new active chemical ingredient, over 150 studies need to be conducted. Chemical regulators need to be confident in not only the efficacy of a product, but also its safety to users, consumers and the environment.

Mr Cossey continued, "Globally, regulatory standards are becoming more demanding and at the same time, crop protection products are becoming even safer for users, consumers and the environment. Pesticides are among the most regulated products in the world. Here in Australia we have one of the most robust and modern regulatory regimes for pesticides and that is why Australians can have confidence in their safety."

Mr Cossey concluded, "As the global agricultural sector meets the challenge of feeding a growing world, the crop protection industry will play a crucial part."

Contact: Katherine Delbridge (Director – Corporate Affairs) Ph: 02 6273 2733 Mob: 0410 491 261
Annie Williams (Manager – Public Affairs) Ph: 02 6273 2733 Mob: 0428 262 294

About CropLife Australia

CropLife Australia (CropLife) is the national 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 \$20.6 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 millions of dollars 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.

