

## Plant science industry responding to threat of fall armyworm

**30 April 2020 (Canberra)** – The moth pest fall armyworm has made its way to Australia with the potential to spread quickly throughout farming regions.

Chief Executive Officer of the national peak industry organisation for the plant science sector, Mr Matthew Cossey, said, “Fall armyworm has been devastating for many overseas farming sectors. This is a pest that now poses a serious threat to Australian crops.

“The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority has responded by approving a number of emergency permits for farmers to utilise should they encounter fall armyworm on their crops.

“The plant science industry is focussed on providing growers with as many solutions as possible to manage pest incursions – including fall armyworm.

“We are preparing a fall armyworm strategy as part of CropLife Australia’s Resistance Management Strategies due for release in the middle of the year. These strategies ensure important crop protection products remain effective tools for farmers.”

Mr Cossey concluded, “Growers encountering fall armyworm should utilise the emergency permits approved by the APVMA in line with their integrated pest management strategy.”

### FACTS:

The fall armyworm (FAW; *Spodoptera frugiperda*) is the larval stage of the lepidopteran pest fall armyworm moth native to tropical and subtropical regions of the Americas.

While a wide range of plant species are known hosts to the FAW, it has a strong preference for maize and can cause significant damage to other crops including rice, sorghum, wheat, cotton, sugarcane, winter cereals and fodder crops.

The FAW was first detected in the Torres Strait Islands in January 2020 and on the Australian mainland in February 2020. It has now been detected in the NT, QLD and WA. It is expected the pest will spread quickly.

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### About CropLife Australia

CropLife Australia is the national peak industry organisation representing the plant science sector in Australia. CropLife’s members are the world-leading innovators, developers, manufacturers and formulators of crop protection and crop biotechnology products. The plant science industry, worth more than \$20 billion a year to Australian agricultural production, provides products to protect crops against pests, weeds and diseases, as well as developing crop biotechnologies key to the nation’s agricultural productivity, profitability and sustainability. CropLife is part of the plant science industry’s 91 country international federation.