

APVMA performance remains high and steady reaching minimum statutory requirement

20 August 2021 (Canberra) – The overall performance of the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) has seen steady improvement over the past few years with numbers hitting a new high in the June 2021 quarterly performance statistics released today.

Chief Executive Officer of CropLife Australia, the national peak industry organisation for the plant science sector, Mr Matthew Cossey said, “It is pleasing to see the overall performance of the APVMA continuing to improve, the regulator should be commended as this is essential for Australia’s farming sector.

“Efficient performance by the APVMA is critical to Australian farmers getting timely access to the latest pest defences. This has ongoing importance for farming productivity, sustainability and the nation’s international agricultural exports through maintaining Australian farmers’ equal access to the new chemistry available to their international competitors.”

While the performance has been enabled to some degree by significantly fewer applications to process compared to this time last year, the APVMA has made great strides at reducing backlogs and consistently achieving 99 per cent processing within statutory timeframes.

Mr Cossey continued, “The APVMA must now focus on introducing step-changes in efficiency. One hundred per cent of on time assessments is the minimum statutory requirement for the regulator, not a target in and of itself. We need well-considered process and regulatory reform that doesn’t disrupt the regulator from doing its normal work, because farmers have suffered from major disruption to the APVMA previously.

“Any future regulatory improvements must be targeted and industry-supported, building on the improvements the APVMA has already implemented while protecting the independent and science-based activities of the world-leading system.

“In May 2020 – during some tough weeks in the COVID-19 pandemic – Minister Littleproud significantly increased the fees and levies charged by the regulator which ends up costing farmers more for these critical products. These substantial increases mean the APVMA is now well-resourced to introduce true efficiencies and deliver a real value proposition for the nation’s plant science and farming sectors.

“What the APVMA does not need is an ill-considered and poorly planned additional layer of bureaucracy in the form of a \$600,000 per annum governance board. It remains disappointing that the Government continues to ignore the advice of the industry and farming sector that will be most impacted by the board’s costs.”

Mr Cossey concluded, “CropLife Australia and our members are committed to working constructively to assist and support the Regulator, the Department and Government to implement further efficiency measures that maintain the integrity and community confidence in the system and deliver better outcomes for Australian agriculture.”

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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.