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## Pest control essential for home gardeners to protect nation's farms

**09 October 2021 (Canberra)** - With months of lockdown a reality for many Australians, lots of people have chosen to use the extra time at home to get into the garden, start their own veggie patch and even undertake new landscaping projects. While exercising the green thumb is a great activity, it is crucial that home gardeners remember to practice responsible pest and disease management in order to protect themselves, their future harvest and Australian farming.

Chief Executive Officer of CropLife Australia, the national peak industry organisation for the plant science sector, Mr Matthew Cossey, said, "While Australia's farmers have our food security covered for us, it's great to see so many people around the country choosing to start growing some produce at home during lockdowns. For anyone embarking on this great hobby, it's very important to practice responsible pest and disease management. This is especially important for home gardeners who are in close proximity to farms, as untreated pests, weeds and diseases, can have disastrous impacts if they spread from backyard gardens into major commercial farms. Particular care and attention will be required as people return to normal work and aren't home as often to tend to their backyard veggie patch or fruit trees.

"Most people wouldn't even think that their backyard veggie patch could possibly cause widescale issue, but pests and diseases are as attracted to produce there as they are to crops on farm. If left unchecked, these pests can pose real and serious threats to major farming operations. Likewise, many common decorative plants can be invasive, allergenic or toxic. We've seen this happen before – insect pests, weeds and diseases can spread very quickly.

"So that home gardeners don't inadvertently threaten farms and our nation's food supply, they should equip themselves with appropriate pest management tools and consult their local garden centre for the best advice on what to use for different produce and how to use those products safely.

Mr Cossey concluded, "Australia's agriculture industry continues to play a huge role in getting all Australians through this pandemic and it's important we all do our bit to support the great efforts of the nation's farmers."

- ENDS

[Audio clips of Matthew Cossey are available online to download](#)

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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.

