
Better recognition needed for women and girls as agents of change

11 February 2022 (Canberra) - Today is the International Day of Women and Girls in Science which recognises the critical role that women and girls play in science and technology.

To mark the day, the UN has identified gender equality and science as vital to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in time. It acknowledges that while significant progress has been made towards increased participation in higher education, women remain under-represented in these fields.

In Australia, girls and women still only make up around a third of students and workers in STEM courses or occupations for agriculture, environmental and related fields in Australia.

Chief Executive Officer of CropLife Australia, the national peak industry organisation for the plant science sector, Mr Matthew Cossey, said, "Ensuring equal opportunities for women and girls in science is essential to realising the potential of science as a means of improving the world.

"Science and technology are core to the future success of Australia's agricultural sector and agriculture worldwide. Gender equality in science will drive new ideas and innovations towards a productive and competitive agriculture sector that can sustainably contribute to food security in Australia and globally," said Mr Cossey.

It's important we recognise and acknowledge the significant contributions of women that drive innovation in this country, from science and research, manufacturing, policy and on-farm to set an example for future female leaders in science. It's also crucial we recognise the benefits that will come for humanity by ensuring full and equal access and participation for women and girls in science.

CropLife and its member companies actively look to support initiatives that support and promote girls and women in science and are fortunate to have some amazing female scientists on our team and in our industry that deliver thought leadership for the plant science industry.

"New ways of thinking bring innovative solutions and broader perspectives amongst policy makers. This is crucial if we want to give ourselves the best chance of solving the challenges that have become closer to home," Mr Cossey concluded.

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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.

