

## World Environment Day – Innovation is key to transformative change

**05 June 2022 (Canberra)** - This World Environment Day 2022 it's important to recognise the contribution of the plant science industry towards transformative environmental change in Australia and globally.

As custodians of about half of Australia's landmass, farmers play a crucial role in protecting and managing the environment.

Chief Executive Officer of CropLife Australia, the national peak industry organisation for the plant science sector, Mr. Matthew Cossey, said, "Such a responsibility of national importance warrants a collective approach from government and industry that supports Australian farmers to meet these challenges.

"Through advances in modern agricultural chemistry and biotechnology, Australia's plant science sector develops the tools and innovations farmers need to produce enough high-quality food, feed and fibre for the world using environmentally sustainable methods.

"Cutting-edge crop protection products and genetically modified crops continue to transform agricultural practices, productivity and improved environmental outcomes. Reduced tillage practices and GM crops have allowed farmers to sustainably grow more crops in a changing climate using fewer resources.

"Importantly these innovations give farmers the power to contribute to the solution beyond food security by reducing emissions, sequestering carbon, reducing food loss and waste and improving soil quality.

"Synthetic, organic and biological pesticides not only play a role in farming but are also an important part of integrated environmental land management methods. This ensures native vegetation and pristine environments are protected from biosecurity threats and invasive pests and weeds," said Mr. Cossey.

"Globally, the plant science industry is one of the world's most innovative sectors, investing tens of billions of dollars in research and development each year to establish new products and better formulations, packaging and use systems. This kind of investment is proving vital to the Australian farming sector's ability to meet demand and deliver environmental benefits, every day on behalf of all Australians.

"However, there is no single solution to climate change. The variety of crops, soils, farming methods, climate conditions, pests, and other factors means no single technology or set of tools will systematically increase productivity, improve soil health, or achieve broader-based climate resilience.

"A collaborative approach that supports innovation in agriculture is needed. Government, industry and farmers must continue to work together to improve sustainability and productivity, starting with better recognition and support for industry stewardship programs that ensure long term responsible product use.

"Agsafe, the wholly owned subsidiary of CropLife Australia, runs successful recycling and stewardship programs such as **drumMUSTER®**, which has collected and recycled nearly 40 million pesticide containers since 1999. Its other program ChemClear®, safely removes damaged or expired agricultural chemicals from the environment. These programs make up part of CropLife Australia's stewardship initiative, StewardshipFirst, which focuses on continued improvement and environmental sustainability. The recently announced bagMUSTER® program is another excellent example of world leading industry and environmental stewardship initiatives" 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.