
APVMA performance data finally released and drop in performance is concerning

29 June 2022 (Canberra) – The significant decline in the APVMA performance in the six months to March this year, compared to the equivalent period the previous year, is both concerning and disappointing. This drop in performance is confirmed by the APVMA's performance reports released 28 June. The unannounced publication of these statistics were themselves months late.

The performance statistics for both the December 2022 and March 2023 quarters were released simultaneously and in a new format that diminishes performance transparency. These data show APVMA timeframe performance for major pesticide applications sit at 86.4 per cent for the March quarter, following a dismal 82.8 per cent reported for the quarter ending December 2022. This decline in performance has occurred off a five per cent decline in actual number of applications but represents more than a 16 per cent decline in real, on-time performance over comparable six-month periods.

“Major pesticide application timeframes are a key metric for Australian farmers to obtain access to the latest modern and innovative crop protection and pest defence products. This is vitally important for the productivity, sustainability, and profitability of Australian farming,” said Chief Executive Officer of CropLife Australia, the national peak industry organisation for the plant science sector, Mr Matthew Cossey.


“Achieving \$100 billion in agricultural production by 2030 depends on ensuring Australian farmers' equal and timely access to the latest technologies available to their international competitors, especially innovative new crop protection products.”

“In the years leading up to 2022 the APVMA had made great strides, returning to a historically strong performance, reducing accumulated backlogs and improving assessment timeframes following the disastrous performance in 2017. Effective management, professional regulatory scientists and dedicated specialised staff at the APVMA had restored and maintained performance at or near 99 per cent processing within statutory timeframes since the September 2020 quarter. That is why this recent significant drop in performance is so concerning and a matter that the APVMA Board and interim management need to explain and address as a matter of urgency to maintain its standing as a world leading independent, technically proficient, and efficient Regulator.

Mr Cossey continued, “In May 2022 the APVMA Board was established by the federal government to supposedly improve governance, efficiency, and the strategic operations of the regulator, despite industry and other key stakeholders raising concerns about the nature, structure and cost of the initiative.

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.



“The costs of this board are set to be borne by industry and the Australian farming sector from next year, while simultaneously paying for the significant opportunity costs of delayed access to innovative plant science solutions which this most recent performance data highlights. The Grains Industry estimated that the disastrous performance of the regulator in 2017 cost Australian farmers in excess of \$500 million in lost productivity due to delayed access to the vital and innovative crop protection products available to their international competitors.

“CropLife Australia and our members remain committed to working with the Regulator, the Department and Government to implement efficiency measures that improve the performance and maintain the integrity and community confidence in the system and deliver better outcomes for Australian farmers,” Mr Cossey concluded.

- ENDS

Contact: Elyse Denman | 0459 550 010 | elyse.denman@croplife.org.au

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.

