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## **New ABARES report confirms Australian farmers are world leaders in sustainable agriculture**

**06 July 2023 (Canberra)** – A new [ABARES report](#) confirms that Australia is a world leader in agricultural sustainability. Innovative land management practices and early adoption of the modern products provided by the plant science industry has allowed Australian farmers to grow more with less, while improving environmental outcomes and maintaining access to international markets that are increasingly discerning to sustainability.

“The report highlights that since the start of the green revolution more than 50 years ago, enabled by plant science innovations, Australian food production has more than doubled, while at the same time being produced on 28 per cent less land. This has been achieved through sustainable intensification of production, driven by the adoption of no till practices and the optimisation of the use of modern pesticides to effectively manage insect pests, diseases and weeds,” said Matthew Cossey, Chief Executive Officer of CropLife Australia, the national peak industry organisation for the plant science sector.

“Conservation farming practices, such as zero-tillage enabled by the judicious use of modern and innovative pesticides, is now the dominant practice on approximately 85 per cent of the nation’s farms. These practices improve soil health, conserve moisture, and minimise soil erosion by wind and water through the elimination of harmful, antiquated tillage practices.

“Australia distinguishes itself by employing responsible and environmentally conscious pesticide use practices. On average, Australian agricultural land showcases genuinely sustainable and comparatively low application rates of pesticides compared to other high-productivity nations. This use is supported by initiatives such as CropLife’s StewardshipFirst suite of best practice programs.”

According to the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (UNFAO), the average pesticide use in Australia stands at only 2.05 kg/ha pa, significantly lower or comparable to most other significant agricultural production and exporting countries.


Additionally, the report acknowledges that there is no global one size fits all approach to farming sustainability practices, but rather practices, products and innovations that need to be suitable for the specific environment they are used in. This demonstrates the importance of a fit for purpose, science and evidence based regulatory and registration system such as Australia’s independent agricultural chemical regulator in the APVMA.

“The ABARES report highlights the importance for the Australian Government to make public policy and regulatory decisions that genuinely improve sustainability, rather than be misled by the false noise of an anti-science agenda we have seen hijack policy making in jurisdictions like the EU.

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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.



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“An independent, science based regulatory system that considers the unique and diverse conditions in Australia allows farmers access to the innovations and technologies that have revolutionised farming since the 1960's and delivered real improvements in farming.

“Australian farmers have been empowered by a system that enables access to innovations that allow them to produce more food on less land with fewer inputs than ever before. The pressure to do better will only continue to increase, which is why regulatory barriers to the introduction of new agricultural biotechnology plant traits and technologies and crop protection innovations must be removed.

Mr Cossey concluded, “In order to continue building Australia's agricultural sustainability credentials it is crucial that policy and regulation keeps up with and enables farmers access to modern innovations appropriate for the unique environmental and farming needs and conditions in Australia.

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