
Cultivating Prosperity: The \$31 Billion Benefit of Pesticides on Australia's Agricultural and Economic Landscape

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06 September 2023 (Canberra) - A new report by Deloitte Access Economics, has revealed that the judicious use of crop protection products directly enables \$31.6 billion of Australia's agricultural output annually - a 53 per cent increase in just five years.

According to the *"Economic Contribution of Crop Protection Product in Australia"* 2023 report, the Australian production of staple foods like onions, carrots, tomatoes, rice, potatoes and strawberries would not be commercially viable without the safe and sustainable use of chemical crop protection products.

"The report shows that 73 per cent of the \$43.2 billion of total crop production is attributable to farmers access to and use of crop protection products," said Matthew Cossey, Chief Executive Officer of CropLife Australia, the national peak industry organisation for the plant science sector.

"These innovations of the plant science industry are a crucial component driving growth in the farming sector as well as improving farming sustainability. It highlights how increasingly crucial modern agricultural chemistry is to support the agriculture sector's ambition to be a \$100 billion industry by 2030 and safeguarding food security for all Australians.

"Economics aside, the fact is without pesticides, 78 per cent of fruit, 54 per cent of vegetables and 32 per cent of cereals currently produced for consumption would not exist. Innovations in plant science means that Australian farmers can continue to provide consumers with access to fresh, healthy and affordable food in the face of new environmental challenges posed by climate change," said Mr Cossey.

Not only do crop protection products improve the cost of living for consumers, but the plant science sector also provides a significant contribution to the Australian economy in areas of employment, manufacturing, research, transport and trade. Since 2015, total employment generated by the sector has more than doubled to 10,450 full-time equivalent roles, contributing \$1.96 billion to the Australia economy directly.

Mr Cossey continued, "For the first time, this report also looks at the value of pesticides to environmental land management in Australia as well. The findings come as no surprise but is welcome news to Australian environmental land managers and farmers who have long pioneered science-based land management techniques specific to their environmental conditions.

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.



This report complements and reinforces other studies like the recent [ABARES report](#) that shows how responsible pesticide use has enabled an increase in agricultural productivity while also enabling a shift of land use into nature conservation.

“We’ve come a long way since early immigrants to Australia soon found that European methods of farming was untenable on the continent’s aged, weathered and thin soils. Specifically, herbicide-enabled no-till farming, galvanised widespread adoption of sustainable agricultural practices, proven to reduce soil erosion by 80 per cent and safeguard water quality by preventing sediment run-off.

For the sake of our farmers, food security and affordability, the environment and our national economy it is vital that we unshackle plant science innovations. This ensures Australian farmers have access to the most up to date, sustainable and innovative crop protection products, the importance of which are only reinforced by this Deloitte Access Economics report released today,” concluded Mr Cossey.

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