
CropLife Calls for Urgent Action to Modernise Agricultural Regulation at Productivity Roundtable

12 August 2025 (Brisbane) - CropLife Australia's Chief Executive Officer, Matthew Cossey, today, urged the Federal Government to act immediately to implement measures that will assist the Australian agricultural sector to lift its productivity.

Speaking today at the Agricultural Productivity Roundtable convened by Minister Collins and Assistant Minister Chisholm in Brisbane, Mr Cossey said the meeting is a welcome opportunity; however, it should not be used as an excuse for delaying actions that can be taken by the Government now.

"We already know that innovation has been at the core of productivity revolutions throughout the history of Australian agriculture. Yet we've seen a two-speed agricultural economy emerge between sectors that have access to and adopt new innovations and science-based practices and those who don't," Mr Cossey said.

"Innovators in crop protection and new seed breeding innovations face growing delays and uncertainty in gaining new product approvals. This makes it harder to bring new technologies to Australian farmers, with our small market. This means returns for companies are often marginal, with some choosing to take their R&D and innovations elsewhere.


"Already global innovator companies are publicly stating they are pulling back from investment in local R&D and commercialisation activity in New Zealand, citing the crippling costs of delay and regulatory burden.

"Without urgent reform, Australia risks being next, leaving Australian farmers waiting years for tools that are already available overseas. That gap is a drag on our agricultural productivity that will only get wider without decisive action from government.

"Today I raised at the ag productivity roundtable, the importance of incentivising innovation which comes at no cost to the Federal Government's Budget. Failing to do so will cost the economy and Australians far more in the long run," said Mr Cossey.

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 \$31.6 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 a part of the plant science industry's 91 country international federation.



CropLife's key suggested policy initiatives are:

1. Restore the APVMA's on-time performance – Maintaining high regulatory standards is not mutually exclusive to efficient, timely and predictable regulation. It is incumbent on the APVMA to better utilise world leading regulatory-science to deliver on-time approvals for new products that will enable our farmers to continue being world-leading.

2. Modernise Australia's Gene Technology Scheme – Delays to implementing modern risk proportionate reforms to Australia's gene technology laws have held back investment in new breeding techniques for almost ten years. These technologies are required to ensure farmers have access to newer crop varieties that are adapted to climate change and underpin healthy eating and access new export markets.

3. Strengthen Australia's IP laws to innovation – Australia's small market for plant science innovation means delays in new products due to mandatory pre-market assessment, reduces the incentive to release new plant science technologies here. Improvement to IP laws will support accelerating the release of new crop protection products and crops that use genetic modification and new breeding techniques.

"These aren't new asks – the plant science industry has been presenting these solutions to the Government for years," said Mr Cossey. "The solutions are on the table. Now it's on the Government to implement them. Without action, Australia faces an agricultural policy and production crisis within the decade."

"Farmers can't lift productivity alone – they need a system that gets innovation to the farm gate faster, more predictably, and with less red tape. Without that, we risk falling behind our competitors and missing out on the economic and environmental benefits these technologies deliver."

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