



## MEDIA RELEASE

### SENATE REFERENCES COMMITTEE REPORT HIGHLIGHTS IMPORTANCE OF URGENT APVMA REFORMS

**9 June 2017 (Canberra)** – The importance of urgent reforms to deliver a more streamlined next-generation agricultural and veterinary chemical regulator is highlighted in the Senate References Committee on Finance and Public Administration’s report on the operation, effectiveness, and consequences of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Location of Corporate Commonwealth Entities) Order 2016* handed down today.

CropLife Australia’s Chief Executive Officer, Mr Matthew Cossey, said the committee’s report illustrates that relocating the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) without the necessary reforms, will lead to serious damaging impact on the Australian plant science industry and the nation’s farming sector in the short, medium and long-term.

“Unfortunately, this outcome has already become a reality, and is primarily due to the loss of the highly technical and specialised workforce of the APVMA and the serious shortage of experienced regulatory scientists, not just in Australia, but globally,” said Mr Cossey.

“A streamlined, effective regulator capable of delivering timely crop protection product risk assessments, approvals and registrations is essential for continued Australian agricultural productivity. To achieve this, urgent reforms are required that leverage technology to streamline APVMA and associated regulatory operations through more efficient data-sharing, digital communications and next-generation infrastructure.”

“As a national peak organisation for an agribusiness industry, CropLife Australia supports, in principle, government initiatives that improve the economic activity and outcomes in rural and regional Australia including decentralisation where appropriate. Our absolute priority and commitment as an industry, however, is to assisting Australian farmers grow more food, feed and fibre safely and sustainably and to assist them be more profitable and internationally competitive,” said Mr Cossey.

“The recent performance statistics published by the APVMA show crucial agricultural chemical product application approvals are at an all-time low – this means Australian farmers are already having to wait longer for access to critical farming tools that their international competitors already have. CropLife will continue to work with the Government, the APVMA and other stakeholders to deliver the urgent reforms necessary to enable the regulator to function through this transition challenge.”

“We look forward to the necessary reforms to deliver an efficient and effective regulator being developed and implemented as a matter of urgency,” concluded Mr Cossey.

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#### About CropLife Australia

CropLife Australia (CropLife) is the peak industry organisation representing the agricultural chemical and biotechnology (plant science) sector in Australia. CropLife represents the innovators, developers, manufacturers and formulators of crop protection and agricultural biotechnology products. The plant science industry provides products to protect crops against pests, weeds and diseases, as well as developing crop biotechnologies that are key to the nation’s agricultural productivity, sustainability and food security. The plant science industry is worth more than \$17.6 billion a year to the Australian economy and directly employs thousands of people across the country. CropLife and its members are committed to the stewardship of their products throughout their lifecycle and to ensuring that human health, environment and trade issues associated with agricultural chemical use in Australia are responsibly and sustainably managed. Our member companies contribute more than \$13 million a year to stewardship activities to ensure the safe and effective use of their products. CropLife ensures the responsible use of these products through its mandatory industry code of conduct and has set a benchmark for industry stewardship through programs such as *drumMUSTER*, ChemClear® and Agsafe Accreditation and Training. Our stewardship activities demonstrate our commitment to managing the impacts associated with container waste and unwanted chemicals.

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