
Farm Safety Week – Protecting our farmers comes first

19 July 2022 (Canberra) - While productivity growth is an essential element of Australian agriculture's international competitiveness, investing in health and safety on-farm is the most crucial input of all.

Chief Executive Officer of CropLife Australia, the national peak industry organisation for the plant science sector, Mr Matthew Cossey, said, "Farm Safety Week is a reminder that there's never a good time or place to cut corners with safety. Especially as fatigue, familiarity and complacency begin to arise from long hours at work in field and on farm.

"Australian farmers are producing more food for more people with fewer resources than ever before. While it might come at the expense of time and labour, it should never come at the expense of health and safety.

"The plant science industry invests billions of dollars in R&D every year which includes safe use practices of all products. This is why strict adherence to label conditions when using and applying pesticides is a nonnegotiable measure for managing risk. Personal protective clothing like impervious aprons, gloves, goggles and chemical proof protective footwear and respirators should always be worn when mixing or applying pesticides.

"CropLife's suite of stewardship initiatives, StewardshipFirst, is another resource for farmers, applicators and agronomists to support farm safety. CropLife's wholly owned subsidiary Agsafe also provides best practice training. This ensures that anyone who stores, handles, transports or provides advice on agricultural chemicals understands how to effectively manage and mitigate any possible risks," said Mr. Cossey.

Agsafe also manages important recycling and disposal initiatives. The drumMUSTER® program has safely disposed of and recycled over 39,000,000 chemical drums since its inception 25 years ago, while ChemClear® ensures expired, unwanted, or unknown pesticides are safely and properly disposed of.

"Safety should never be an optional extra, rather the foundation of all decisions. Our farmers need to make a commitment to invest in themselves, with the knowledge that the plant science sector will always be behind them," Mr Cossey concluded.

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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.

