
New APVMA Board Must Restore Governance and Regulatory Performance

Canberra, 27 March 2025: The national peak industry organisation for the plant science sector welcomes the appointment by Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, of Rebecca Billings and Andreas Clark as new directors to the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA). CropLife also welcomes the reappointment of Dr Steve Jefferies AM for a further three-year term.

“I commend Minister Collins for providing some new blood on the APVMA Board at a critical time for the Regulator,” said CEO of CropLife Australia, Matthew Cossey.

“These appointments offer much-needed renewal, with the APVMA’s performance needing to improve and deliver efficient and timely assessment of new crop protection products while maintaining high regulatory standards.

“Australian farmers are currently suffering from unnecessary delays to accessing new world leading innovations; impacting their productivity, sustainability, profitability and international competitiveness.

“Aside from appointing an appropriately qualified and experienced Board, its incumbent upon the Government to provide the APVMA with the public resourcing necessary to deliver public benefit outcomes without penalising Australian farmers. This is the number one issue for whichever political party forms government after the upcoming election. We call on both sides of politics to commit to fully funding the APVMA’s governance costs and the public good activities of chemical review, compliance and monitoring activities.

“The APVMA is the only pesticide regulator in the OECD that does not receive government funding and with proposed increases in fees and charges ultimately paid by farmers, this will only doubly penalise Australian farmers - raising the cost of critical farm inputs and further delaying access to new products already available in larger markets.

“Maintaining high regulatory standards is not mutually exclusive to efficient, timely and predictable regulation. Good governance will see the APVMA better utilise world leading regulatory-science to deliver regulatory approvals for the new products that will enable our farmers to continue being world-leading.

“It is critical that these appointments establish a culture and doctrine that protects the stability and integrity of the APVMA’s independent and evidence-based decision-making processes, free from interference from government, industry and activists”, concluded Mr Cossey.

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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 \$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.

