
Farm Safety Week 2024: Make sure you're 'In Safe Hands' with best-practice

Canberra, 14 July 2024: This Farm Safety Week CropLife Australia is urging farmers to ensure they're in safe hands when transporting, handling and storing pesticides. Adequate training, planning and strict adherence to product label instructions are vital to protecting farm workers and the environment.

"Thankfully Australia has an extraordinarily good record of safe chemical use on farm, demonstrated by very low rates of workplace incidents. Let's make sure we keep it that way," said Chief Executive Officer of CropLife Australia, the national peak industry organisation for the plant science sector, Mr. Matthew Cossey.

"Safety of the users and handlers of pesticides is the reason why Australia has robust regulatory and compliance systems, which are designed to protect worker safety and dictate effective on-farm practices. As a first line of defence, it is important that farmers ensure they're purchasing legitimate, lawful and quality crop protection products."


CropLife members invest billions of dollars in R&D every year. This includes developing modern and safe formulations and packaging as well as comprehensive label instructions for the safe use of all products. Further investment into product stewardship includes CropLife's StewardshipFirst® initiative, a suite of best-practice programs and resources for product application. [SprayBest](#) and [MyAgCHEMUSE](#) were specifically developed to help farmers, spray contractors and environmental land managers optimise the safe and effective use of crop protection products while protecting themselves, neighbours and the environment."

Farmers, agriculture workers and product applicators should follow these top tips to manage risk when handling pesticides:

Follow the label: Australia has one of the world's most highly regarded, technically competent, independent regulators in the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA). The APVMA rigorously and independently assess all scientific information for human health and environmental safety and efficacy of pesticides before a product can be registered. It also provides strict conditions of use on the labels that are legally binding. The labels on pesticide products contain crucial information regarding proper handling, application, protective equipment requirements, and disposal. It is vital to thoroughly read and understand these instructions before using any pesticide.

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.



Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): The appropriate use of PPE, such as impervious aprons, gloves, goggles and chemical proof protective footwear and respirators should always be worn in line with the product instructions.

Store and Dispose of Pesticides Properly: Safely store pesticides in secure, designated areas away from children, animals, and food products. Follow local guidelines for pesticide disposal to prevent contamination of water sources and soil. CropLife's not-for-profit stewardship services provider, Agsafe, manages important national collection, recycling and disposal initiatives including **drumMUSTER®**, which has safely collected and recycled nearly 42.5 million chemical drums since its inception over 25 years ago. ChemClear® ensures expired, unwanted, or unknown pesticides are safely and properly disposed of. Agsafe also provides training to support chemical retailers with safe transport, storage and handling of pesticides.

Best Practice Professional Services: Ensure that anyone involved in pesticide transport, storage, handling and application receive proper training and information. Stay up-to-date with the latest safety practices and techniques to minimise risks. Agsafe also provides best-practice training for anyone who stores, handles, transports or provides advice on agricultural chemicals on how to effectively manage and mitigate any possible risks.

Mr Cossey concluded, "There is never a good time or excuse to cut corners when it comes to the safe use of crop protection products. Not only to ensure the safety of farm workers, families and communities but also to ensure continued access to these critical tools into the future."

For more best-practice advice and information go to stewardshipfirst.com.au.

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