
CropLife Australia calls for action as APVMA Performance nosedives

15 July 2025 (Canberra) - The peak industry for the plant science sector, CropLife Australia, is calling for action after the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) today revealed a staggering drop in its performance. New data for the quarter ending March 2025 shows just 54.9 per cent of application assessments for new, novel chemistry are being completed on time.

"In just three years performance in this critical category has nosedived from 98.8 per cent to a dismal 54.9 per cent," said Matthew Cossey, Chief Executive Officer of CropLife Australia. "This failure to meet even the most basic legislated performance standards and repeated delays in new product registrations is leaving Australian farmers exposed to preventable crop losses, costing the economy hundreds of millions of dollars every year."

"This kind of chronic underperformance by a commonwealth regulator is unacceptable and has gone on far too long. Despite the skill and dedication of its scientific staff, the APVMA has allowed itself to be dragged down by a culture mired in public service inertia," said Mr Cossey.

"Agriculture is a backbone of the Australian economy. At a time when the Treasurer and Finance Minister are calling for bold proposals to drive national productivity, growth and prosperity, the APVMA's inefficiency stands as a roadblock to progress. Immediate action is needed.

"The APVMA already has the tools and resources to fix this, including access to independent external scientific reviewers and fit-for-purpose digital assessment technologies. Delays in registration persist because of a cultural reluctance to embrace proactive, efficient practices. Delays of this magnitude are simply inexcusable when tools for improvement are readily available. What's required now is the leadership to return focus to providing on-time regulatory assessment required to deliver farmers with new technologies to boost farm productivity.

"The newly appointed Board members and CEO must now drive a cultural shift within the APVMA to overcome bureaucratic stagnation and enable the agency's scientific staff to deliver on both registration and compliance activities that Australian farmers and the broader community deserve.

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.



“Sustainable long-term funding from the Australian Government is also critical to addressing the APVMA’s structural funding flaws and supporting the growing demands on the Regulator to deliver public good functions such as chemical reviews, compliance and enforcement.

Mr Cossey concluded, “Without decisive action, Australian farmers will be denied access to the innovative tools they need, and consumers will ultimately bear the cost of reduced agricultural productivity and higher food prices.”

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