



9 April 2014

**Committee Secretary**  
**Senate Standing Committees on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport**  
**PO Box 6100**  
**Parliament House**  
**Canberra ACT 2600**

By email: [rrat.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:rrat.sen@aph.gov.au)

**RE: Submission on *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Legislation (Removing Re-approval and Re-registration) Amendment Bill 2013***

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Legislation (Removing Re-approval and Re-registration) Amendment Bill 2013*, to inform the Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport's current inquiry. CANEGROWERS are supportive of this bill's passage through Parliament.

The availability and access of effective, safe and cost efficient chemicals, particularly herbicides are extremely important for Queensland cane growing businesses. Our proximity to the Great Barrier Reef makes this matter even more important.

CANEGROWERS is supportive of the APVMA's ability to review registrations when concerns have been raised about the use or safety of a particular chemical or product. CANEGROWERS was not supportive of the previous Government's plans for a mandatory re-registration process, as this would have had the potential to remove effective generic products from the suite of chemicals used in cane for weed control. A balance is required.

For example, the APVMA's recent review of the generic herbicide diuron and its risk to water quality and the Great Barrier Reef highlighted that some chemical companies were not prepared to invest in a generic product when market share is marginal. The new label conditions resulting from the review also resulted in growers moving to alternative softer herbicides. This can be seen as positive; however this has increased costs for growers. In addition, there is now concern from reef scientists and green groups about the toxicity these alternative products may have on the Great Barrier Reef. Agriculture relies on safe, economical and effective chemicals for productivity.

CANEGROWERS is not in a position to comment on all specific details of the Bill, however we support a transparent and efficient assessment and registration process that reduces the cost to farmers to access herbicides and chemical products.

**CANEGROWERS supports:**

- Reducing red-tape and measures to improve efficiencies
- Quality assurance and testing for imported or locally manufactured agricultural chemical products as these products must be efficacious and safe.
- The importance of appropriate timeframes for implementation of any changes
- The \$8M funding commitment for a minor use and emergency permits program to address biosecurity matters, access to new and innovative agrichemical and maintaining existing products.



CANEGROWERS encourages the Government to work collaboratively with industry and through NFF's Rural Affairs Manager, David McKeon.

Yours faithfully,

Brendan Stewart  
CHIEF-EXECUTIVE OFFICER