

PRESS RELEASE

CropLife International Supports Ban Ki-Moon's Call to Combat Desertification and Drought

Plant Science Technologies Help to Conserve Land and Water

Brussels, 16 June 2009 – CropLife International welcomes United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon's global appeal to help fight drought and desertification and to stem its further expansion with the help of improved science and technology.

Plant science and technologies are an important part of the solution to conserve critical natural resources such as land and water. Plant science offers innovative tools to help the world's farmers adapt to drier conditions and grow food more sustainably:

- Drought- and flood-tolerant plants are being developed through plant biotechnology, and a regulatory application has already been made for a drought-tolerant corn. Research is also being directed at developing crops that can tolerate increased levels of salinity in the soil.
- CropLife and its members teach Integrated Crop Management (ICM) techniques to farmers worldwide each year to help them use crop protection products responsibly and in a way that makes optimal use of natural resources. For example, irrigated water use per unit of output has decreased by 20 to 50 per cent in four key crops over the past two decades.
- Conservation tillage farming, enabled by herbicide use and biotech crops, reduces soil erosion and helps retain soil moisture, as well as significantly reducing carbon emissions due to fewer passes over the field.

Howard Minigh, CEO and President of CropLife International said:

"The plant science industry is committed to addressing key global issues like climate change and food security. We have to double, or even triple, food production by 2030 with a fixed amount of land and natural resources. These challenges can only be met if we all work together."

Agriculture and livestock production account for 70 per cent of the fresh water used globally, and global food demand continues to grow. As Ban Ki-Moon acknowledged, agricultural R&D needs to be given "adequate and predictable funding" and to be coordinated across sectors, while putting farmers at the centre of these solutions.

Desertification, land degradation and drought already affect one-third of the Earth's surface and have forced an estimated 24 million people to migrate to new areas. The plant science industry can help reduce agriculture's impact by

preserving land, water and biodiversity through reduced losses and greater yields per acre.

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Note to Editors:

CropLife International is the global federation representing the plant science industry. It supports a network of regional and national associations in 91 countries, and is led by companies such as BASF, Bayer CropScience, Dow AgroSciences, DuPont, FMC, Monsanto, Sumitomo and Syngenta. CropLife International promotes the benefits of crop protection and biotechnology products, their importance to sustainable agriculture and food production, and their responsible use through stewardship activities.