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Bayer CropScience commits to cane innovation

Bayer CropScience has reinforced a strong commitment to Australian sugarcane innovation and sustainable production, announcing ongoing support to Project Catalyst Australia at the annual Growers Forum in Townsville this month.

Bayer CropScience and Catchment Solutions (Project Catalyst coordinators) signed an MOU to extend the partnership between Bayer and Project Catalyst for the 4th year running.

Project Catalyst is a pioneering partnership aimed at reducing the environmental impacts of sugarcane production on the Great Barrier Reef through innovative farming practices. Project Catalyst seeks to test and validate practices that are good for farmers and also good for the reef, driving practice change and on-farm innovation.

Improving water quality from agricultural catchments is vital to improving the resilience of the Great Barrier Reef in the face of many threats, including a changing climate.

Richard Dickmann, Head of New Business Development for Bayer CropScience said, "We are delighted to extend our support of Project Catalyst. Project Catalyst is a perfect partner for Bayer as we share a commitment to improving reef water quality, and the role of innovation as a key driver of delivering sustainable farming outcomes."

Since starting the collaboration with Bayer, Project Catalyst farmers have undertaken trials targeted at optimising herbicide application, leading to three new registration projects and new weed control protocols. Bayer local team worked with growers to develop more than 50 optimised herbicide treatment plans to improve the rate, timing and placement of herbicides on grower's farms.

"Together, Bayer CropScience and Project Catalyst growers are highlighting changes in the management practices of weeds, disease and insects in the sugarcane industry. We are identifying solutions for more effective farming through innovative application techniques and trials," Mr Dickmann said.

Rob Cocco, CEO of the Reef Catchments Group, said, "We welcome the news of ongoing support from Bayer CropScience and thank them for their support over the past four years. Bayer's involvement has allowed Project Catalyst to transition toward the use of improved pesticide products and practices that are not only better for the farmer but also beneficial for our waterways and reef. Through continued partnership with Bayer we are confident we can identify and validate solutions to enhance farm profitability while looking after the environment."

Both Bayer and Catchment Solutions have agreed to broaden work on the targeted application of herbicides, as well as the potential delivery of projects in the area of digital agriculture.

"We are focused on initiatives that lead simultaneously to better yields, better water quality and better economic return for the sugarcane industry," Mr Cocco said.

Project Catalyst is a pioneering partnership of diverse stakeholders and more than 75 forward-thinking cane farmers. Major partners include WWF, Catchment Solutions and The Coca-Cola Foundation, who provide foundation funding. Regional NRM bodies are also involved from Queensland's major areas of sugarcane production (Mackay Whitsunday, the Burdekin and the Wet Tropics). Bayer is a supporting contributor to Project Catalyst.



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About Bayer CropScience

Bayer is a global enterprise with core competencies in the fields of health care, agriculture and high-tech materials. Bayer CropScience, the subgroup of Bayer AG responsible for the agricultural business, is one of the world's leading innovative crop science companies in the areas of seeds, crop protection and non-agricultural pest control. The company offers an outstanding range of products including high value seeds, innovative crop protection solutions based on chemical and biological modes of action as well as an extensive service backup for modern, sustainable agriculture. In the area of non-agricultural applications, Bayer CropScience has a broad portfolio of products and services to control pests from home and garden to forestry applications. The company has a global workforce of 21,000 and is represented in more than 120 countries.

The Bayer CropScience Australian head office is located in Melbourne. This and further news is available at: www.bayercropscience.com.au

About Catchment Solutions

Catchment Solutions is an environmental consultancy and service provider based in Queensland, Australia. As part of the wider Reef Catchments Group, Catchment Solutions works locally, nationally and in Southeast Asia to help clients manage, design and execute projects to meet high standards of environmental excellence and corporate responsibility. With a strong team of environmental researchers, scientists and project facilitators, Catchment Solutions is uniquely placed to progress environmental operations, engagement, communication and partnerships. Catchment Solutions has strong relationships and extensive experience across both the public and private sectors, including at all levels of government and business, as well as with industry peak bodies, the wider research sector and leading community groups and organisations to deliver comprehensive environmental solutions.

For more information visit www.catchmentsolutions.com.au

IMAGE (original attached)



Bayer CropScience formally announced ongoing support for Project Catalyst Australia at the recent Growers Forum in Townsville. From left:

- Tim Murphy (Territory Sales Manager, Bayer CropScience)
- Richard Dickmann (Head of New Business Development, Bayer CropScience)
- Robert Coccoo (CEO, Reef Catchments Group)
- Sue Cross (Head of Development, Bayer CropScience)
- Royce Bishop (Chair, Reef Catchments Group)