



## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Illegally imported seed poses risk to Australian agriculture**

**5 August 2021 Canberra** –A recent report from the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment has highlighted a significant presence of seed borne bugs and pathogens in seed ordered through the mail from overseas. These pests pose a significant risk and could be potentially devastating for Australia’s environment and agricultural industries.

Australian Seed Federation CEO, Mr Osman Mewett urges the public to only purchase seed from reputable sources, and not from unknown online mail-order sources overseas.

“It is important to buy clean, high-quality seed, and only plant and use seed from known and trusted sources, such as ASF members.

“Seed imported legally by reputable seed companies undergoes rigorous testing to meet Australia’s strict biosecurity requirements before it is distributed through commercial channels,” said Mr Mewett.

“This is critical to prevent or control plant pests that may affect seed quality and result in the introduction of new pests into Australia.

Seeds of unknown origin pose a major threat to Australia’s biosecurity as they carry no guarantee of having undergone these important testing procedures and could lead to the introduction of different types of plant pests and invasive species to the environment including pests that have not previously been reported in Australia.

“Healthy seeds are an essential part of sustainable food production. Keeping seeds, and consequently plants, healthy is crucial to ensure a sustainable food supply, as well as to protect Australia’s environment and agricultural enterprises.

“The ASF and its members are continually working with the Department to ensure that Australia’s biosecurity settings facilitate the movement of high-quality, clean and healthy seeds” concluded Mr Mewett.

**Always buy your clean, high-quality seed from trusted seed suppliers, such as ASF Members:**

<https://www.asf.asn.au/membership/asf-members/>

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#### **About Australian Seed Federation**

The Australian Seed Federation (ASF) is the peak industry body for the Australian seed industry at the local, state, national and international level. The ASF also represents its members internationally, as a member of the International Seed Federation (ISF) and the Asia Pacific Seed Association (APSA).

The ASF strives to deliver *Sustainability, Leadership, Integrity and Collaboration* on key issues including climate change adaptation, world food security, technological developments, trade, and the growth in productivity of Australian and international agriculture, through the delivery and supply of new and improved commodities and services to the market.