

MEDIA RELEASE

International Day of Plant Health: Healthy Plants Start with Healthy Seeds

Today's inaugural [International Day of Plant Health](#) is a great opportunity to highlight the importance of healthy seed to healthy plants.

Mr Osman Mewett, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Seed Federation (ASF), the peak national association for Australia's seed for sowing sector said, "The seed industry has been supportive of the idea of celebrating an International Day of Plant Health from the very beginning."

"Keeping seeds, and consequently, plants, healthy is crucial to ensure sustainable agriculture and food systems, as well as protecting the environment and ecosystems" Mr Mewett said.

Building on the achievements of the International Year of Plant Health in 2020, the International Day of Plant Health has five specific objectives:

1. Increase awareness of healthy plants contribution to food systems,
2. Campaign to minimise risk of spreading plant pests,
3. Strengthen monitoring systems to protect plant health,
4. Enable sustainable pest and pesticide management, and
5. Promote plant health innovations.

Mr Mewett continued, "The seed industry works hard to ensure that healthy, quality seeds reach growers around the world, starting with production and hygiene measures and concluding with state-of-the-art seed health testing."

"Seeds are the foundation of crop, forage and vegetable production, and therefore healthy seeds, which have gone through stringent processing and testing procedures are a prerequisite for sustainable food production." "The private seed sector works closely with the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment towards making the best quality seed accessible to all, to support plant health, food security, and sustainable agriculture," concluded Mr Mewett.

Sarah Corcoran, Chief Executive Officer of Plant Health Australia (PHA), the coordinator of the Australian plant biosecurity system said "Australia has a long history of protecting plant health. For over 21 years, PHA has improved plant biosecurity outcomes by bringing together government, industry and researchers to work collaboratively to address plant biosecurity threats."

"Plant pests and diseases are responsible for the loss of up to 40 per cent of global food crops. The 2021-2031 National Plant Biosecurity Strategy released earlier this year provides a framework to strengthen and build a resilient and contemporary plant biosecurity system that will continue to support Australian plant industries, economy, environment and communities."



For more information:

www.fao.org

www.planthealthaustralia.com.au

<https://www.asf.asn.au/>

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