

Opening Statement for the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade

**Dennis Prouse
Vice President, Government Affairs
CropLife Canada**

November 17, 2016



**representing the plant science industry
représentant de l'industrie de la phytologie**

Madame Chair,

My name is Dennis Prouse, and I am Vice President, Government Affairs of CropLife Canada. With me is my colleague Pierre Petelle, Vice President Chemistry with CropLife Canada. We greatly appreciate the kind invitation you and your fellow Committee members have extended to us today.

CropLife Canada is the trade association representing the manufacturers, developers and distributors of plant science innovations, including pest control products and plant biotechnology, for use in agriculture, urban and public health settings. We are committed to protecting human health and the environment, and in providing a safe, abundant food supply for Canadians. We believe in driving innovation through continuous research. CropLife Canada is a member of CropLife International, a global federation representing the plant science industry in 91 countries.

Our mission is to enable the plant science industry to bring the benefits of its technologies to farmers and the public. Those benefits manifest themselves in many different forms, including sustainability, innovation, driving agricultural exports, job creation, strengthening the rural economy and increased tax revenue for governments.

Canada is a trading nation, and in no other sector is that more true than agriculture. Canada enjoyed a surplus of close to \$12 billion in agri-food trade in 2015. This is very positive not only

for the Canadian economy, but for the leadership role that Canada can play in feeding a growing world population.

Across Canada, 9 out of every 10 farms are dependent on exports. This represents 210,000 farms and includes a majority of farms in every province. Canada's food processing sector employs a further 290,000 Canadians. Agriculture is a tremendous avenue for future Canadian trade growth.

It is for this reason that Canada must remain a strong and reliable partner in the World Trade Organization. Indeed, in an increasingly turbulent and difficult global environment, Canada more than ever must play a leadership role as a nation adhering to science based regulation and liberalized, rules based trade.

It is for those reasons that CropLife Canada and its member companies support the broad aims of Bill C-13, to bring our laws into compliance with the World Trade Organization standards. We are also very appreciative of the flexibility shown by the Government of Canada, and their willingness to work with stakeholders, when we raised technical concerns about the wording in one part of C-13.

Bill C-13 amends six pieces of legislation, one of which is the Pest Control Products Act (PCPA). This is obviously a vitally important Act for many of our member companies.

We met with officials from Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency in July 2016 to discuss our concerns related to the PCPA amendments contained in Bill C-13. Along with the Canadian Consumer Specialty Products Association, we also made a presentation to the House of Commons Standing Committee on International Trade on October 4, 2016.

As mentioned, we strongly support the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Trade Facilitation. It was our view, however, that some of the amendments drafted to ensure that Canada meets our obligations for the provision of "in transit" goods may have inadvertently expanded the scope of the current law. We proposed amendments that would ensure predictability in the Canadian marketplace while meeting our trade obligations under WTO.

We were pleased that we were able to work with government officials and the Members of the House of Commons Standing Committee on International Trade in a very collaborative way to address these issues. The Committee accepted our rationale to amend the originally proposed section 33(1) which changes the definition of "label" under the Pest Control Products Act. As a result of the amendment passed by the Committee and ultimately adopted by the House of Commons, the Bill now meets our trade obligations without increasing the scope of the definition of a label for the domestic industry.

To conclude, Madame Chair, we are strong supporters of free and open trade around the globe, and we are appreciative of the efforts of governments both past and present to grow and protect those vital trading opportunities for Canada. We were pleased by the flexibility and responsiveness shown by the government and Parliamentarians to our technical issues with Bill C-13, and we endorse it in its present form.

I thank the Committee for its time, and would welcome any questions.