

World Water Day brings Message of Conservation & Plant Science Contributions from CropLife Asia

SINGAPORE, Mar 22, 2017 - (ACN Newswire) - As the world marks World Water Day, CropLife Asia took the opportunity to encourage greater awareness around the diminishing availability of this precious resource and highlighted the critical role that plant science technology plays in promoting greater water conservation in agriculture use. Projections have the global population eclipsing nine billion inhabitants by the year 2050, and Asia alone likely to have one billion more people calling it home by then. With the population growing, so too is the demand for food. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, growers around the world will need to produce as much as 70% more food than today to meet the expected needs of our population in 2050. Meanwhile, agriculture already accounts for a staggering 70% of global water use - with the World Water Council reporting that 17% more water will be needed than is available to feed the growing population just by 2020. To illustrate the importance of water use in agriculture, it's estimated that producing 1 kilogram of rice alone requires 3,400 liters of water. World rice fields consume more than 1.3 billion cubic meters of water annually, which is 21% of the global water use for crop production. Presently, half a billion people live in countries chronically short of water. By 2050, that number will be more than four billion. "The scarcity of water in our world is rapidly becoming a critical issue - and the amount of this precious resource required to feed a growing planet can't be ignored," said Dr. Siang Hee Tan, Executive Director of CropLife Asia. "Improving agriculture's efficiency with water use is an absolute necessity. The innovations of plant science technology are making a difference and enabling farmers in Asia to grow more with less - but the ultimate solution needs to be a diverse and shared one, and there's much work left to be done." Through an increasing number of advancements, the plant science technologies of crop protection and plant biotechnology are better enabling farmers around the world to engage in water use efficiency. In particular, by reducing weeds' use of moisture, herbicides are helping farmers produce higher yields with the same amount of water. Another specific benefit supported by crop protection is the water conservation it promotes by helping reduce the need for tillage. No-tillage farm techniques, where the soil remains undisturbed, aids water conservation by retaining moisture in the soil. Research has shown that no-till weed control with herbicides increases soil moisture by 25% and production by 16%. Meanwhile, new plant biotech traits are being added to crops such as corn, rice and cotton that will enable crops to use less water and even improve productivity under periods of drought. For example, drought-tolerant corn in Sub-Saharan Africa is expected to provide yield increases of 20-50% under moderate drought conditions, translating into the potential production of 2 million more tons of food. About CropLife Asia CropLife Asia is a non-profit society and the regional organization of CropLife International, the voice of the global plant science industry. We advocate a safe, secure food supply, and our vision is food security enabled by innovative agriculture. CropLife Asia supports the work of 15 member associations across the continent and is led by eight member companies at the forefront of crop protection, seeds and/or biotechnology research and development. For more information, visit us at www.croplifeasia.org. Contact: Duke Hipp Director, Public Affairs CropLife Asia Tel: +65 6221 1615 duke.hipp@croplifeasia.org

Contacts

ACN Newswire
+65 6304 8926
[mailto: singapore@acnnewswire.com](mailto:singapore@acnnewswire.com)