

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: EXCITING FUTURE FOR SOUTH AFRICAN BIOTECHNOLOGY AS CROPLIFE
APPOINTS LEAD FOR PLANT BIOTECHNOLOGY

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CropLife International, the voice and leading advocate of the plant science industry, has announced that it is transitioning its biotechnology programmes in Southern Africa to CropLife South Africa. Following trends from elsewhere in the world, the consolidation will bring plant biotechnology and crop protection activities under one organisation, CropLife South Africa, with a goal of capitalising on synergies between the two technologies in delivering integrated pest management solutions.

The transition includes the appointment of a lead for plant biotechnology at CropLife South Africa. The purpose of the position is to support the ongoing successful commercialisation of plant biotech products as well as trade of biotech commodities into and out of South Africa. Heading up this exciting position is newly appointed Chantel Arendse, who will take up the role in June of this year.

Arendse is no stranger to the industry and has over two decades of experience in the agricultural sector. She has held positions at the Agricultural Research Council (ARC), the National Department of Agriculture (NDA), the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), and more recently, the United States Department of Agriculture - Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (USDA-APHIS). She holds a MSc, Plant and Soil Science (Cum laude) from Tuskegee University and a BSc Honours degree in Microbiology from the University of Cape Town.

"I am delighted that we have been able to attract a talent such as Chantel into the CropLife SA family. CropLife SA member companies strive to offer balanced pest control solutions to South African farmers, so it is a logical progression to combine traditional plant protection offerings with new technologies, like plant biotechnology, in order to achieve the goal of providing sustainable and integrated pest control solutions for local farmers. As the industry association representing most companies providing such integrated plant protection offerings, CropLife SA needs to continually adapt its mandate and activities in order to support its member companies equally", says CropLife SA chief executive officer, Rod Bell.

The plant biotechnology industry in South Africa compares well with international trends. Although climatic conditions have been challenging since 2014, South Africa is still ranked as the World's 8th largest producer of biotech crops based on the 2018 figures, with an 87% adoption of biotech maize, 95% adoption of biotech soybean and 100% adoption of biotech cotton.

In order to provide our farmers with the best possible plant protection tools to grow these healthy crops, CropLife promotes the principles of integrated pest management which involves using the best combination of cultural, biological and chemical measures for particular circumstances, including plant biotechnology. For this reason, the convergence of traditional crop protection strategies and plant biotechnology is essential in providing sustainable agricultural solutions.

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Note to Editor:

CropLife South Africa is a non-profit industry association that serves and represents responsible manufacturers, suppliers and distributors of sustainable crop protection and public health solutions in the agricultural, public health, non-crop and consumer sectors of South Africa. We enable our members to be providers of environmentally compatible solutions that ensure sustainable, safe and affordable food production, and therefore food security.