



media release

For immediate release

13/11/2025

FIONA SIMSON TO LEAD AUSTRALIA'S AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY SECTOR AS NEW ABCA CHAIR

Canberra, November - The Agricultural Biotechnology Council of Australia (ABCA) is pleased to announce the appointment of Fiona Simson as its new Chair.

As Vice-President of the World Farmers' Organisation and former President of the National Farmers' Federation, Ms Simson brings extensive leadership and experience in advancing science-based farming policy, both in Australia and internationally.

Established in 2012, ABCA serves as the national coordinating body for agricultural biotechnology, ensuring that policy and public understanding of gene technologies are guided by credible, science-based information. By bringing together farmers, scientists and industry, ABCA plays a vital role in ensuring public debate and regulatory frameworks are informed by evidence rather than misinformation.

Ms Simson's appointment comes at a critical time. As climate change intensifies and biotechnology innovation accelerates it is more important than ever for public discourse and policy regarding farming be based on science.

"Australia must have farmers, scientists and policymakers at the table to ensure we keep pace with global developments and continue to meet our ambitious sustainability and productivity goals," said Ms Simson.

"It's vital that Australia not only learns from international experience but also contributes to shaping global standards and dialogue on agricultural biotechnology. These technologies are not a silver bullet, but they are a key part of the toolkit farmers need to remain productive and resilient in a changing climate."

Ms Simson said her focus as Chair will be on promoting fact-based, transparent discussion around biotechnology to support informed decision-making by farmers and the broader community.

"For Australian agriculture to benefit fully from innovation, we need open, evidence-driven conversations with a realistic appreciation of risk that build public confidence and understanding of the science," Ms Simson said. "At its core, ABCA exists to support informed debate so primary producers and the public can make confident, evidence-based choices about biotechnology's role in the future of farming."

The ABCA executive also thanks Dr Joe Smith who served as independent Chair for more than three years, for his dedication and contribution to ensuring credible science-based information about agricultural biotechnology remains accessible in Australia.

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About ABCA - ABCA is the national coordinating organisation for the Australian agricultural biotechnology sector and was established to pursue recognition of the current and potential benefits of agricultural biotechnology. ABCA is a whole of sector initiative with three founding members – [AusBiotech](#), [CropLife Australia](#), and the [National Farmers' Federation](#).