

THE AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF DEANS OF AGRICULTURE

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DEANS CHALLENGE FARM PRODUCT CLAIMS AND CALL FOR GREATER OVERSIGHT

The Australian Council of Deans of Agriculture (ACDA) has questioned the scientific legitimacy of the claims for many products being sold to farmers.

The problem has become so severe that evidence-based registration of these products is needed.

Products under the guise of 'fertilisers', 'biological' and 'natural' and with claims, such as 'store soil carbon' or 'restore soil health', currently avoid the scrutiny of regulation and registration applied to other chemicals.

President of the ACDA, Professor Rick Roush, commented that 'that there are many products on the market about which unsubstantiated claims are made.'

'No evidence is provided to back-up these claims and in most cases the composition of the product is not revealed. These products are compromising the integrity and quality of legitimate products in the market place and may create risks to health and the environment.'

Further, the Deans conclude that many hard-earned farmer dollars are wasted on these products annually for no return, due to misleading advertising.

Professor Roush noted 'we should not be risking the introduction of illegitimate contaminants into our food supply, export products and environments where there are no gains.'

The ACDA urges farmers and their advisers to insist on a reputable complete analysis of the content of these products, together with scientific evidence to back the claims, before outlaying any funds.

The ACDA will be asking the relevant ministers and authorities to proceed to have evidenced-based registration introduced for all products sold to farmers.

'We need to protect the integrity of our essential food industry as well as the producers, on whom we depend. The environment also needs to be protected' added Professor Roush.

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