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Australia gets new agricultural biotechnology council

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Singapore: AusBiotech, CropLife Australia, Grains Research and Development Corporation and the National Farmers' Federation have jointly launched the Agricultural Biotechnology Council of Australia (ABCA) to act as a national representative organization for agricultural biotechnology.

The ABCA has been established to encourage informed debate on biotechnology through dissemination of credible, balanced, science-based information and help shape a new era of agriculture in the country. Its work aims to place biotechnology and gene technology into context as another invaluable innovation for Australian agriculture; ensuring that science guides public policy for the future of farming in Australia.

Dr Anna Lavelle, CEO of AusBiotech, has been appointed a non-executive director of ABCA to extend AusBiotech's work in supporting the development of the agricultural biotechnology sector in Australia.

Dr Lavelle said: "Biotechnology provides benefits to both farmers and consumers and important improvements are helping farmers to protect their crops from pests, diseases and droughts to provide consumers with increased yields which help to ensure a plentiful and low cost supply of food."

"Biotechnology innovations ensure that Australian farmers can supply food, while reducing the environmental foot print of agriculture through reduced use of pesticides and other environmental contaminants," she added.

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The Chair of ABCA, Claude Gauchat, said: "As the world's farming sector seeks to double production to meet the food and nutritional requirements of the growing global population, we have a moral imperative to encourage and develop all potential tools and technologies that will aid farmers in producing more with less, sustainably."

ABCA was launched at the House of Representatives Alcove at Parliament House in Canberra as part of Science Meets Parliament Week.