

Bayer seeks Australian approval for next-generation Herbicide to tackle resistant weeds

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Icafolin-methyl, featuring a new mode of action, could reach Australian grain growers from 2028, subject to regulatory approval



Bayer has taken a significant step in expanding its herbicide innovation pipeline by submitting an application to Australia's pesticide regulator seeking approval for icafolin-methyl, a next-generation herbicide designed to help grain growers combat increasingly resistant weeds. If approved by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA), the herbicide could become available to Australian farmers from 2028, strengthening the industry's arsenal against herbicide resistance, one of the biggest threats to crop productivity.

The submission underscores Bayer's long-term investment in crop protection research at a time when Australian growers are facing mounting challenges from difficult-to-control weeds and shrinking herbicide options. According to Bayer, weeds continue to be one of the leading causes of yield losses worldwide, increasing production costs and placing sustained pressure on farm profitability. As resistance continues to spread across key grain-growing regions, the company believes access to new herbicide chemistries will be essential alongside integrated weed management practices.

Icafolin-methyl represents the first active ingredient from a new isoxazoline carboxamide chemical class to reach advanced development within Bayer's research pipeline. The herbicide has been developed primarily for grain production systems and introduces a new mode of action that could help diversify resistance management strategies. Australia has played an important role in the product's development through Bayer's long-standing Herbicide Innovation Partnership (HIP) with the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC). The collaboration has enabled earlier field testing under Australian conditions, allowing researchers to evaluate the chemistry against local weed species and farming practices while positioning Australia among the priority markets for commercialisation.

The development also marks the first herbicide built using CropKey®, Bayer's proprietary research platform that applies advanced computational design to optimise new crop protection molecules for efficacy, safety, environmental performance

and ease of use. The company believes the technology will accelerate the discovery of future crop protection solutions while supporting more sustainable farming systems. Developing new herbicide chemistry has become increasingly complex, requiring more than a decade of research, extensive scientific validation and substantial investment before products can reach growers. Bayer noted that rigorous regulatory assessment remains a critical part of ensuring new crop protection technologies meet Australia's high standards for human health, environmental safety and agricultural performance.

The regulatory submission represents the latest milestone in Bayer's global weed management strategy as the company continues investing in innovative chemistry to address one of agriculture's fastest-growing production challenges.