



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CLA AND ARA ANNOUNCE AMERICAN AGRONOMIC STEWARDSHIP ALLIANCE

Washington, D.C. (March 12, 2004) – CropLife America and Agricultural Retailers Association today announced the creation of the American Agronomic Stewardship Alliance, marking their collaboration on a program for promoting the safe stewardship of crop protection products throughout the supply and distribution chain.

Jay J. Vroom, president and CEO of CropLife America, and Jack Eberspacher, president and CEO of Agricultural Retailers Association, finalized the American Agronomic Stewardship Alliance on behalf of their respective members.

“Stewardship does not stop at the manufacturer’s gate – broadening the stewardship avenue is essential to maintaining our public franchise to operate,” noted Vroom.

“ARA has been involved with the development of the Alliance since 2001. We believe that support for stewardship throughout the value-chain is vital,” said Eberspacher.

The American Agronomic Stewardship Alliance is an inspection and accreditation program for crop protection retail facilities. The new organization will be managed by a board of directors comprised of a mix of manufacturers, retailers, distributors and ag-related trade groups. The new organization will oversee a warehouse and retail facility and site inspection process and manage an inspection database. Crop protection manufacturers will be the end users of inspection data.

CropLife America's board of directors approved the development of a warehouse and retail accreditation program in 1997. In 2001, CropLife America and Agricultural Retailers Association agreed to work jointly to develop stewardship guidance and develop an inspection and accreditation program. A successful pilot test was conducted in 2003. Facility inspections will start in June 2004.

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Established in 1933, CropLife America represents the developers, manufacturers, formulators and distributors of plant science solutions for agriculture and pest management in the United States. CropLife America member companies produce, sell and distribute virtually all the crop protection and biotechnology products used by American farmers.

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Agricultural Retailers Association is a national trade organization providing a national voice for the retail sector of the agricultural industry. With offices in Washington, D.C., the ARA is focused on issues and programs that affect the profitability and professionalism of ARA members.

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