

17 March 2017



Chemicals Management and Standards Section
Department of the Environment and Energy
Via email: minamata@environment.gov.au

**Re: Response to the national phase down of mercury –
Final Regulation Impact Statement (Exposure Draft)**

The National Farmers' Federation (NFF) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the exposure draft on the national phase down of mercury. The NFF is the peak national body representing farmers and, more broadly, agriculture across Australia. Operating under a federated structure, individual farmers join their respective state farm organisation and/or national commodity council. These organisations collectively form the NFF.

The NFF is aware that Shirtan®, a fungicide containing Mercury, is currently used by cane growers to control pineapple disease in sugar cane. Shirtan® would need to either be phased out or receive an exemption notice for future use should the Australian Government ratify the Minamata Convention on Mercury, a global treaty to curb mercury usage.

In line with CANEGROWERS' submission, the NFF recommends the Department to adopt RIS Options 2 or 3 so as to allow sufficient time for growers to be consulted and informed about the phase-out of Shirtan® while permitting Australia to meet the requirements of the Minamata Convention. Consequently, the NFF opposes Option 4 of the Exposure Draft, for the accelerated phase-out would not provide cane farmers with enough time to transition to alternate products and make it difficult for the cane industry to host information sessions about alternate fungicides for growers in time.

For further information please contact:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "MARK HARVEY-SUTTON".

MARK HARVEY-SUTTON
Manager, Rural Affairs
mharveysutton@nff.org.au