

OLD LEFTOVER PESTICIDES: A TIME BOMB

DON'T LET LEFTOVER PESTICIDES become a tragedy. Banned and unusable products can pose harm to the environment and to your health—unintentionally or intentionally, like the deadly New Sweden arsenic poisoning.

“You never know how or when forgotten chemicals might turn up again,” said Le-belle Hicks, BPC pesticides toxicologist.

“The New Sweden incident is an unfortunate reminder for growers to clean out the barn. Storing obsolete pesticides invites disaster. Leaks or spills can contaminate soil and water and are costly to fix.”



Hazardous waste disposal is costly and dumping chemicals is illegal.

Fortunately, there's a third option that's both legal and responsible. Better yet, it's free.

Every year, if budgets permit, the BPC offers a disposal program for banned pesticides or pesticides that have become caked, frozen, or otherwise rendered unusable. The 2007 program collected 7,507 pounds of obsolete pesticides.

Register today for this year's disposal program: call 207-287-2731, or mail in the obsolete pesticide inventory form found at www.thinkfirstspraylast.org.

LOOKING FOR RECERTIFICATION CREDITS?

The BPC Credit Calendar lists many training programs and is updated frequently. Go to www.thinkfirstspraylast.org and check it out!

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Permit No. 8
Augusta ME 04330

MAINE BOARD OF PESTICIDES CONTROL
28 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, ME 04333-0028



PRIVATE APPLICATOR EDITION

THE BULLETIN OF THE MAINE BOARD OF PESTICIDES CONTROL

SPRING 2008

BPC'S NEW 25-FOOT UNTREATED BUFFER TO SURFACE WATER BECOMES EFFECTIVE MAY 1, 2008

AFTER OVER A YEAR of discussion and dialog, the BPC has adopted a new 25-foot mandatory setback to surface water for terrestrial broadcast application of pesticides. The new requirement, Section 6—Buffer Requirement, of Chapter 29—Standards for Water Quality Protection, goes into effect on May 1, 2008. Spot and directed applications are still allowed within the 25-foot setback. In addition, applicators that can demonstrate a need for broadcast applications within the 25-foot zone may apply for a variance permit from the Board.

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State and national water monitoring data have made a compelling case for the need for additional safeguards against pesticide runoff. For instance, exhaustive national sampling by the U. S. Geological Survey showed that streams draining agricultural areas had detectable levels of one or more pesticides 97% of the time. Pesticides were detected in these streams at concentrations high enough to be toxic to aquatic organisms 57% of the time.

For a copy of the new rule and/or additional information, go to the BPC website at www.thinkfirstspraylast.org, or call 287-2731.

BT CORN RULES ENCOURAGE COMMUNICATION AND COOPERATION BETWEEN NEIGHBORS

IF YOU ARE A CORN GROWER and thinking about Bt corn as an alternative, there are certain new BPC rules you need to know about. Section 5—Plant Incorporated Protectants has been added to Chapter 41—Special Restrictions on Pesticide Use. The BPC now registers a number of varieties of Bt corn with corn borer and/or rootworm protection. Some varieties also have tolerance to herbicides, either Liberty® or Roundup®. The new rules require Bt corn growers to receive BPC training and a certificate good for two years, record keeping, and a refuge requirement. If your neighbor within 500 feet of your Bt-corn field lets you know that they are planting non-Bt corn, then your refuge must be planted in a manner to minimize the potential for cross pollination.



Cornfield with refuge rows.

The training was offered several times this past winter, and the certificate is good until December 31, 2009, the second year after it is granted. Training covers Bt corn—what it is and how it works—and label requirements for insect-specific refuges. A refuge is a section of your cornfield that is planted to non-Bt corn. This allows for insects sensitive to Bt to mature and mate with any Bt-resistant insects which develop in the Bt corn. In Maine, at least 20% of your cornfield must be planted to non-Bt corn. The labels and Insect Resistance Management (IRM) documents explain what a non-Bt-corn refuge is, why it's important, and how to do it. What may not be obvious is that, if resistance occurs, the use of the

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MAINE'S PESTICIDE CONTAINER RECYCLING PROGRAM NEEDS YOU!

IT HAS TAKEN A LOT OF WORK and coordination on the part of many, but Maine now has an excellent program for the recycling of plastic pesticide containers. Growers, dealers, transfer/waste facilities, the Ag Container Recycling Council (ACRC), and the BPC have all been working together to make this happen. However, Maine still has work to do to become a leader in the ag container recycling effort.

The ACRC reported that, in 2007, approximately 40,000 pounds of agricultural containers were recycled in Maine. This represents about 50,000 containers. Pesticide containers can be recycled at one of these locations:

- ▶ **Dexter:** Mid-Maine Solid Waste Association; Tramp King, Superintendent, 207-924-3650
- ▶ **Frenchville:** Northern Aroostook Regional Waste Facility; Norman Cyr, 207-728-7716
- ▶ **Machias:** Bay Area Transfer Station; Henry Chausse, Director, 207-255-8292, or Betsy Fitzgerald, Town Manager, 207-255-6621



plastic agricultural containers that held crop-related products such as adjuvants, crop oils, and surfactants can also be recycled in this program.

Container caps are usually made of a different kind of plastic and cannot be recycled. Clean the caps at the same time the containers are rinsed and dispose of them as normal solid waste. Pesticide labels and paper booklets interfere with the recycling process. Remove all booklets, sleeves, and easily removed paper on containers. Collection site managers have the obligation to inspect all containers before accepting them and reserve the right to reject any container that is not empty, clean, and properly rinsed.

Several benefits result when growers participate in the plastic recycling effort. First, the industry as a whole can claim responsible stewardship of plastic that is generated on farms. Secondly, plastic collected through this program is recycled into ACRC-approved end-use products such as corrugated plastic drain tile and underground utility conduit. By recycling the plastic, a “closed-loop” system is created and useful products are made from plastic that would have otherwise ended up as waste.

In summary, there is an excellent way to recycle plastic now. Like most things worthwhile, it does take some amount of effort. Your effort can yield positive results. When working with others in the farm community these results can be substantial.

For more information on pesticide container recycling, go to www.thinkfirstspraylast.org.

and with acreage totals and seeding rates for both. Also required are pesticide records for any refuge treatment and planting information for each distinct site including date and time of planting and brand name of the Bt corn.

To download the complete Chapter 41, including the new Section 5 on plant-incorporated protectants, as well as a Bt-corn factsheet, go to www.thinkfirstspraylast.org/laws/index.htm or www.thinkfirstspraylast.org/about/board_news.htm, respectively.

(Bt Corn, continued from page 1)

product and all other products with the same gene makeup may be canceled. In addition to BPC inspectors, the companies selling these products will be visiting to ensure that the IRM is ongoing and that their grower agreements are working.

The records required in Chapter 41, Section 5, must be kept on the farm. They can be declared confidential business information. These include: a map with the Bt corn and refuge configurations marked

CONTROVERSY PERSISTS OVER AERIAL SPRAYING AND DRIFT...

THE BPC CONTINUES to methodically review and discuss new measures to reduce the impacts of aerial spraying and pesticide drift to people living near the treatment sites. The Board made aerial spraying its top priority in 2006 and 2007—and with good reason. The Board was petitioned to ban aerial spraying in both 1995 and 2006. In addition, there have been two bills in the Legislature to establish buffer zones for aerial spraying, and lawsuits over spraying have been threatened against Maine’s two largest blueberry-growing companies. All of these actions demonstrate citizen dissatisfaction with the current laws protecting them from aerial spraying and drift.

Every year the Board receives a handful of complaints about aerial spraying. Some people are caught off-guard by the spraying when their windows are open and their laundry is on the line. More often, people complain that the mists/vapors result in symptoms—sometimes described as the summer flu—such as headache, sore throat, watery eyes, and a metallic taste in the mouth. People are also concerned about the long-term impacts of being exposed to pesticides.

During the spring and summer of 2007, the BPC enlisted the help of two committees to study these aerial issues. A technical committee reviewed recent research that might be helpful in reducing drift, and a stakeholders committee met five times to identify the major issues and develop ideas for the Board’s consideration. In addition, the Board has been receiving both written and oral input since July of 2007.



Board members have been working through a long list of ideas put forward from a variety sources. They will continue to do so until a draft rule is published, at which point comments will be received according to rulemaking procedures. To date, the Board has focused on three topics in three specific areas:

1. Improving the current requirements for advance notification;
2. Upgrading requirements to ensure that aerial applicators spray the correct site; and
3. Upgrading the requirements for site maps and planning, and the identification of sensitive

areas—especially sensitive areas where people tend to be.

Other more difficult topics—such as buffer zones and standards of harm for off-target residues—are being left for last.

Board discussions to date, “point toward the need for better communication between growers, commercial applicators, and neighbors, and the development of better site plans and maps for the aerial applicator to work from,” according to John Jemison, Board member and chair of the stakeholder group. “We are looking for better systems for applicators to positively identify the field, and be completely aware of all sensitive areas. Better preparation will go a long way toward alleviating some of the public concerns,” said Jemison.

For up-to-date information on aerial spraying and drift, check Board News—Meetings & Issues at www.thinkfirstspraylast.org.

VIOLATIONS

BPC inspectors report growers commonly fail to:

- ▶ wear all the Personal Protective Equipment required by the label
- ▶ calibrate equipment and keep records of the calibration
- ▶ identify sensitive areas and keep records of them (such as a map)

- ▶ comply with Worker Protection Standards:
 - ▶ post Central Information Displays
 - ▶ train agricultural workers or pesticide handlers
 - ▶ notify workers of application
 - ▶ provide decontamination sites within ¼ mile of worksite
- ▶ keep all of the required application

records (FYI: Chemical information only needs to be recorded once. Keeping a copy of the label with records is one way to meet the requirement.)

- ▶ keep any records
- ▶ store pesticides in a secure enclosure

Review your pesticide application practices today—don't get caught red-handed!