

To: Members, Board of Pesticides Control
Megan Patterson, Director, Board of Pesticides Control

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Subject: Stakeholder meeting: Pesticide Notification Registry

Thank you for beginning efforts with stakeholder meetings to consider a pesticide notification registry. The opportunity for stakeholders to discuss this important issue will help us develop a realistic and stakeholder responsive plan for a pesticide notification registry. Maine had established a pesticide notification registry but it was repealed.

The comments below provide rationale for why we should work toward re-establishing a pesticide notification registry. I am involved with the Maine Organic Farmer's and Gardener's Association. However, these comments are my own, some may be consistent with MOFGA positions and other comments are not.

In terms of public perception of pesticide use, **this is a critical time for stakeholders to work together in establishing a registry, an opportunity to educate the public about pesticides and educate us stakeholder's about the public's expectations in how we use pesticides:**

- Over the past several years, the general public's concern about pesticide use and its human, wildlife and overall environmental impacts has increased considerably as has the public's desire to learn more about pesticides and their effects
- Maine now has over 30 communities which have passed local pesticide control ordinances. These vary a lot in content. The underlying point is that these ordinances are generally the work of local advocates and the fact that they are approved at the town level demonstrates public concerns about pesticides
- At the same time, for many of the public, ideas about pesticides are incomplete and inaccurate:
 - some see pesticides as an all/nothing/zero sum issue;
 - pesticide use by commercial applicators, including farmers, has the public's attention but many don't know that homeowners use pesticides, the toxicity of some of commonly used pesticides, and the importance of following application instructions;
 - some know that organic farmers use non-synthetic pesticides and work from a restricted list of pesticides approved for organic farming but many think that organic farmers never use pesticides;
 - there is little understanding about how pesticides are approved for use, how this works in Maine and the public's role;
 - consumer's are happy to buy, for example, the perfect apple. However, many consumers don't realize that they can help reduce pesticide use by lowering their expectations for the perfect apple. Taking this example further, most people don't know that Maine's Cooperative Extension Service provides regular updates on apple

pests and diseases with guidance on how much or little pesticides can be used to produce the perfect apple;

- The general public looks toward reducing pesticide use but there exists no data base to develop these data.
- Some commercial applicators, including farmers, use Integrated Pest Management (IPM), and we should encourage more to use IPM because its philosophy aims for strategic pesticide use. IPM's major limitation is its lack of specifics when compared to the regulations and principles governing certified organic practices.

Stakeholders should move to get ahead of public concerns and develop a pesticide notification registry and a reporting data system, including retail sales. If not, we may end up with legislation requiring notification and reporting which is difficult for stakeholders to implement.

It is significant that the pesticide industry has lost big court cases. Most recently, a Missouri jury awarded \$265 million to a peach grower who argued that Bayer's dicamba-based herbicides damaged his orchard. Bayer has another multi-billion dollar case over damage caused by Round-up. Corteva Agriscience announced it was ending production of chlorpyrifos in part due to decreased sales. Decreased sales are directly the result of concerns about chlorpyrifos's toxicity.

As we work on this issue, public education is essential to address public concerns about pesticide use in Maine. While not within BPC's purview, reduction in pesticide use will require a commitment by state government to offer transition funding to farmers to move toward organic practices.

Thank you for reading these comments.