

August 15, 2016

Maine Board of Pesticide Control  
Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry  
22 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Members of Maine's Board of Pesticide Control and Staff:

Beau Chemin Preservation Farm is a certified organic farm in Waldoboro. Adjacent to us and our organic hayfield is conventionally farmed cropland maintained by a local and well respected farmer. Given that any losses to our crops of contamination from herbicides and pesticides becomes our financial responsibility, we are sensitive to problems of drift and related other contamination. Therefore, we do appreciate the concerns of those in residential neighborhoods where non-organic chemicals may be used on adjacent property and on publicly owned land.

In recent months, the BPC has discussed implementation of educational outreach. I encourage the BPC to implement a robust educational outreach program, including YardScaping, targeting citizens, landscapers and retail outlets. Among other benefits, an educational effort would provide support to landscapers who are transitioning to organic as well as landscapers serving communities that have implemented pesticide control ordinances.

In the past several years, pesticide use in Maine has increased 700%. Considering that "An Act to Minimize Reliance on Pesticides" stated it is "the policy of the state to work to find ways to use the minimum amount of pesticides needed to effectively control target pests in all areas of application", the 700% increase in pesticide use is alarming and unacceptable. In addition, "The board (of Pesticides Control) shall implement a system of record keeping, reporting, data collection and analysis that provides information on the quantity of product and brand names of pesticides sold. The board, in cooperation with the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Service, shall study ways to improve pesticide information data bases and to optimize the useful analysis of reported information". And, "No later than October 1, 1998 and each thereafter, the board shall publish an annual pesticides report containing the quantity of product, sorted by name and United States Environmental Protection Agency registration number, of all pesticides sold in the prior year, and the data further sorted by sector of use wherever possible".

These statutory responsibilities are not being met. Not only do Maine's citizens deserve data on pesticide use in Maine, it will be much easier to interpret the data if Maine's citizens are well informed about pesticides.

I urge the BPC to implement a comprehensive educational outreach program including media, ramp up the YardScaping program, implement a reliable pesticide use collection and analysis effort, and work toward meeting its statutory responsibility to reduce pesticide use in Maine.

Thank you to all members of the Board and to staff for your recent efforts to address these statutory responsibilities.

Sincerely,

Jo Ann Myers  
Beau Chemin Preservation Farm  
Waldoboro, Maine