



Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association

COMMON GROUND COUNTRY FAIR

January 5, 2016

Maine Board of Pesticides Control
State House Station 28
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Members of the Board,

During the past year, MOFGA has joined other organizations and members of the public, in repeatedly requesting that statewide data collection on pesticide use become a more focused component and a higher priority of the Maine Board of Pesticides Control (BPC). The now widely circulated graphic that indicates a 700% increase in distribution of pesticides intended for homeowner use in Maine has been widely cited by the public and is a frequent topic of conversation among members of the board. Regardless of how the board might feel about the source and representation of this figure, the fact remains that it is the best data available to the public to identify trends regarding pesticide use in Maine. Updating and refining data collection certainly seems like an area of common ground for all the parties interested in pesticide use in the state. As one of those parties, MOFGA is requesting that the board begin to track and annually disseminate sales data for the following active pesticide ingredients: prodiamine, dicamba, 2,4-D, imidacloprid, bifenthrin, dithiopyr, glyphosate, mecoprop, and permethrin.

These ingredients are believed to be among the most widely used in Maine's urban areas. Some were recently detected in storm water and/or sediment through surveys conducted by BPC staff. These data are requested so that the board and the public can, over time, establish whether or not pesticide use is decreasing in the state. Data collection is a scientific, verifiable way to demonstrate whether or not the Board is meeting its mandate to reduce reliance on pesticides.

BPC staff presentations have repeatedly indicated that the changing nature of product formulations and current methods of data collection make the task of collecting data onerous. In response to this concern, we are requesting data collection on a distinct and limited set of active ingredients at this time. However, this list is not static and will likely need to be amended in the future to respond to changing chemical configurations and emerging technologies. This request should allow the staff to develop a system for collection that is efficient and easily built upon in the future.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ted Quaday, Executive Director

P.O. Box 170 • 294 Crosby Brook Road • Unity, Maine 04988-0170

Phone: (207) 568-4142 • Fax: (207) 568-4141

mofga@mofga.org • www.mofga.org



Natural Resources Council of Maine

3 Wade Street • Augusta, Maine 04330 • (207) 622-3101 • Fax: (207) 622-4343 • www.nrcm.org

January 6, 2016

Maine Board of Pesticides Control
State House Station 28
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Members of the Board:

I am writing to strongly support and echo MOFGA's recent request for information and recording of the use of specific active ingredients. Throughout the past year, NRCM has been hearing from and working with members of the public and many of our 16,000 members and supporters to obtain clear and consistent information about the distribution and use of pesticides and herbicides in Maine. As members of the Board are well aware, people throughout Maine are concerned about this issue. This concern was magnified when the graphic showing a 700% increase in the distribution of pesticides into Maine between 1995 and 2011 was removed from the BPC's website.

NRCM staff has met with the previous director of the BPC regarding this issue. As relayed in that meeting, NRCM does not believe that removing the graphic was the best solution to any perceived, public confusion about it. We also strongly disagree with any notion that the graphic itself is inaccurate or misleading. During the Board meeting at which this issue first began to be discussed more than a year ago, Gary Fish, the BPC staff person who compiled the data and created the graphic, stated that it was valuable for showing the overall trend of pesticide use in Maine. We agree.

That said, the real issue at hand is the ability of Maine people to access information to make informed decisions about health and public policy. It is in the best long-term interest of the Board, and the people of Maine, for the BPC to provide clear and accurate information to members of the public and policy makers at the state and local level.

The tracking and providing of annual sales data for products with the active ingredients glyphosate, 2, 4-D, permethrin, mecoprop, bifenthrin, dithiopyr, imidacloprid, prodiamine, and dicamba would be a good first step. These particular ingredients are among the most widely applied and have been found in storm water run-off, Maine's environment, and Mainers ourselves.

Whether or not data collection is complicated, the public needs the information. This limited list of the most widely used active ingredients will allow the public and policy makers to assess efforts to meet Maine's statutory goal to reduce reliance on pesticides. Thank you for considering this important matter.

Sincerely,

Sarah Lakeman, Sustainable Maine Project Director

Protecting the Nature of Maine

Printed on post-consumer recycled, processed chlorine-free paper

