



Natural Resources Council of Maine

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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

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