

Interpreting Pesticide Product Labels: Key to Pesticide Safety - Mickey Taylor

A. Objectives

1. Think before you apply
2. Read the label
3. Follow ALL label directions, restrictions, and cautions
4. Make pesticide safety paramount in your operation

B. The label is the law

1. Legally binding contract between you, the product registrant, and the EPA
 - a) Label - what is on the product
 - b) Labeling - all documentation about the product
2. EPA reviews all products (FIFRA)
 - a) Approve labels
 - (1) Can require labeling changes
 - (2) Approve all labeling language
 - b) Review products every 15 years
 - (1) All products are on a cycle
 - (2) Misuse can trigger a review
3. Registration types
 - a) Standard Federal registration
 - b) Restricted Use
 - c) Unclassified or General Use
 - d) Public Health Emergency
4. Licensing
 - a) Varies by state
 - b) Can be different for public and private
 - c) Minimum standard
 - (1) Work under supervision of a licensed applicator
 - (2) Person holding license need not be there but must be available

C. Parts of the label

1. 4+ sections
 - a) Identifying info
 - (1) Most obvious
 - (2) Includes name and AI
 - (a) Trade name
 - (b) Chemical or common name
 - (3) Use classification
 - (4) Signal words
 - (a) Danger-Poison: High toxicity (I)
 - (b) Danger: High, esp skin and eye hazard (I)
 - (c) Warning: Moderate (II)
 - (d) Caution: Slight (III)
 - (5) Manufacturer
 - (6) EPA registration number
 - b) Precautionary statements
 - (1) Provides info on minimum PPE
 - (a) Can be split up between handlers and applicators
 - (b) Determined by
 - i) Formulation
 - ii) Toxicity of pesticide
 - iii) Activity being performed
 - (2) Tells what care must be taken to be safe

- (3) Re-entry info
 - (4) Can also include
 - (a) Exposure treatment
 - (b) Environmental hazards
 - (c) Physical hazards
 - (d) Chemical hazards
 - c) Directions for use
 - (1) How to mix
 - (2) How to apply
 - (3) Buffer zones
 - (a) Runoff management
 - (b) Spray drift concerns
 - (4) Re-entry intervals
 - (5) Resistance management
 - d) Storage and disposal
 - (1) All storage precautions
 - (2) How to correctly dispose of product and container
 - e) Conditions of sale may also be on the label
- 2. Exposure routes
 - a) Especially important to read this on warning labels
 - b) How does this enter the body
 - (1) Skin
 - (2) Eye
 - (3) Inhaled
 - c) PPE
 - (1) Store away from pesticides
 - (2) Keep clean and in good repair
 - d) EPA is looking to standardize PPE
- D. ULV hazards
 - 1. Solvents can be corrosive
 - 2. High drift hazard
 - 3. Calibration is critical
 - 4. Need to be aware of your surroundings
 - 5. PPE varies based on situation
- E. Things to do
 - 1. Have notebooks with labels in your vehicle
 - 2. Safety
 - a) Do not transport chemicals in cab of vehicle
 - b) Carry a spill kit
 - c) Always carry and use your PPE
 - d) Have a first aid kit
 - e) Have a fire extinguisher that works with the product you are using
 - 3. Remember, you are visible
 - a) Be professional
 - b) Know your product so you can respond to questions
 - (1) Know the what and why
 - (2) Educate
 - (a) Why control is needed
 - (b) What you are using and why
 - (c) What they can do
 - (d) Never ever say

- i) Safe
 - ii) Organic
 - iii) Environmentally friendly
 - iv) Natural
 - v) Harmless
 - vi) Approved by EPA
 - c) Carry copies of info on the pesticide
 - (1) Application records
 - (2) MSDS / SDS
 - (3) Labels
 - d) If you don't know, don't make something up
 - (1) Provide a business card to someone who does know
 - (2) Get contact info and get back to the person
- 4. Read the label!
- F. Uses inconsistent with label
 - 1. Applying to plants, animals, or sites not on label
 - 2. Applying at higher than labeled rate
 - a) Expensive
 - b) Environmental hazard
 - 3. Applying in a method not allowed by label
- G. Bottom line
 - 1. Read the label
 - 2. Select the correct product
 - 3. Work with your product vendor
 - 4. Talk to manufacturers
 - 5. Read the label
 - 6. Safety first
 - 7. Plan plan plan
 - 8. Get training on Globally Harmonized Systems
 - 9. Read the label - labels do change