



Using Agricultural Chemical Products Responsibly – Following Label Instructions

Rural Chemicals Program

Introduction

Agricultural chemical products must be used in accordance with the *Agricultural and Veterinary Products (Control of Use) Act 2002* and the *Agricultural and Veterinary Products (Control of Use) Regulations 2004*. The Act and Regulations came into operation on the 29th August 2004.

The General Duty of the Act requires that when using or disposing of agricultural chemical products, all reasonable and practical measures be taken to prevent or minimise harm to humans, the environment and the contamination of plants and animals.

When agricultural chemical products are registered for sale by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA), they are only approved for use for the purposes stated on the label.

The Act and Regulations require agricultural chemical products to be used according to label instructions. These requirements are explained in detail in this fact sheet.

Label Instructions that must be observed

The types of label instructions that must be observed are listed below. Failure to observe these instructions could result in a penalty of up to \$35,000.

“Do Not” statements

Statements containing any of the following words **must be observed** when using agricultural chemicals:

Must; Must not; May not; Do not; Not for use; Not to be used; Use only

Examples of such instructions are:

“For use only as an agricultural herbicide.”

“Do not apply with misters.”

Directions for use

The following label instructions relating to directions for use must be observed.

Crop

Label instructions for crops must be observed as follows:

- Products must only be used on a crop or situation that is listed on the label, and
- The rate and frequency of application must not be higher than stated for that crop in SA.

If there are no instructions for the use of the product on a crop in South Australia, then the product:

- May be used on that crop if it is listed for another State; and
- Must not be used at a higher rate or frequency than listed for the crop in the other State.

Rate and frequency of application

Products may be used at lower rates or frequencies than listed on the label.

Pest

Products may be used on pests not listed on the label, provided that the instructions for the crop are observed as above.

Off-label Use

To use a product for a crop not listed on the label, or at a higher rate or frequency than indicated, an off-label permit is required from the APVMA to permit the use.

Current off-label permits are listed on the APVMA website and are provided as part of PIRSA's inFINDER Agrivet Chemical Information Service.

Qualifications and Restricted Chemical Products

Where the label states that the product must only be used by an authorised person who has specific qualifications or training, then no other person may use that product.

Some labels state that the product is a Restricted Chemical Product only to be supplied to, or used by, an authorised person. These products must only be used by “authorised persons” as listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Authorised persons for use of restricted chemical products

Chemical	Authorised persons
Any Schedule 7 Dangerous Poison	A person who holds a prescribed qualification*.
A chemical product containing mevinphos or endosulfan or acrolein	A person who holds a prescribed qualification*.
A pre-construction termiticide that contains bifenthrin or chlorpyrifos	A licensed pest management technician whose licence authorises them to use that chemical product.
A chemical product containing pindone as a concentrate when the label instructions require the product to be mixed with a carrier before using as a bait.	A licensed pest management technician whose licence authorises them to use that chemical product; or: An authorised officer under the Natural Resources Management Act who has been trained in use of that product.
A chemical product containing sodium monofluoroacetate (1080) as a concentrate when the label instructions require the product to be mixed with a carrier before using as a bait.	A person licensed under the Controlled Substances Act to handle that product; or: An authorised officer under the Natural Resources Management Act who has been trained in use of that product.

* Prescribed qualifications include: ChemCert Accreditation, SMARTtrain Chemical Application Accreditation, SMARTtrain Chemical Risk Management Accreditation and Spray Solutions Accreditation (current at time of printing).

Withholding Periods

The withholding period is the time that must elapse following treatment with a product before a particular activity, such as harvesting, is undertaken. Withholding periods must be observed to ensure that unacceptable chemical residues are no longer present in marketed produce.

Examples of withholding period instructions are:

“Do not apply later than 3 days before harvest.”

“Do not graze or cut for stock food for 1 day after application.”

However, produce may be sold within a withholding period provided the purchaser is notified in writing of the product used, date used and withholding period that applies.

Home garden products

Home garden products available from suburban hardware and garden centres are generally less hazardous than agricultural chemical products used on a commercial scale. However care must still be exercised in their use.

Label instructions must be followed as already explained in this Fact Sheet when home garden products are used on plants or crops that are traded (sold, exchanged, bartered).

For all use of home garden products, the General Duty must be complied with.

Horticultural crops

Specific conditions for use of products by horticulturalists participating in PIRSA approved Quality Assurance schemes are set out in the Fact Sheet “Responsible Agricultural Chemical Product Use in Horticulture – Provisions for Participants in Quality Assurance Schemes”.

Further Information

For information about the responsible use of agricultural and veterinary products and instances that require off-label permits:

PIRSA Rural Chemicals Program

Phone: (08) 8226 0549

E-mail: PIRSA.Ruralchemicals@state.sa.gov.au

Website: www.pir.sa.gov.au/ruralchem

The Act and Regulations can be viewed online at www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/sa or purchased from Service SA Government Legislation Outlet, 101 Grenfell Street Adelaide.

For information about the registration of agricultural and veterinary chemicals and the off-label permit scheme:

Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA)

Phone: (02) 6272 5158

Website: www.apvma.gov.au

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