

The Benefits of Pesticides:

A Valuable Tool for Good Living

Introduction

- A necessary part of everyday life
- Benefits often go unnoticed
- We only hear negative stories
- Contributions to society include:
 - Protecting property
 - Preventing disease
 - Putting dinner on the table
 - Improving quality-of-life

Key Areas of Public Benefit

- Public Health
- Property Protection
- Biodiversity and Wildlife Habitat
- Aquatic Systems
- Soft Landings for Athletes
- Environmental Protection
- Strengthening Society
- Transportation and Utilities

How Pesticides Maintain Public Health

- Disease control
- Eliminate dangerous pests and weeds
- Protect food supplies
- Keep drinking water free from microorganisms
- Reduces manual labor
- Protect pets and livestock



How Pesticides Protect Property

- Save \$ millions in structural and property damage
- Protect plants and natural investments
- Keep collections and historic documents from being lost



Protecting Wildlife Habitat

- Control pests and non-native threats to ecosystems and native species
- Help farmers produce more using less land
- Make no-till farming possible, reducing erosion and runoff to lakes and streams



Aquatic Weed Control

- Aquatic weeds can destroy wildlife habitat
- Interfere with hydroelectric production
- Improve water quality, navigation lanes and water-front property values



Soft Landings for Athletes

- Help grow healthy turf which prevents sports-related injuries
- Provide a cool playing surface



Environmental Protection

- With the help of pesticides healthy lawns and turf protect our environment



How Pesticides Strengthen our Society

- Help maintain a diverse and specialized economy
- Keep parks, public spaces and lakes free from dangerous plants and pests
- Make us more competitive in the global market



Protect Transportation Lines and Utilities

- Eliminate brush around traffic signs and roadsides
- Suppress growth and remove plants that interfere with utility service



Purpose and Safety

- Designed to serve a specific purpose
- A rigorous science-based process
- Products must be registered by the **Environmental Protection Agency**



The Pesticide Registration Process

A Pesticide Comes to Market

- **Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA)** – requires EPA review of all pesticide products
- EPA investigates potential risks for plants, humans, pets, the environment and more
 - EPA evaluates short and long-term risks
- States register pesticides for use within their borders

EPA Registration Process: By the Numbers

- **8 to 10 years** – average duration of entire development and testing process for each new pesticide
- **\$150 to \$185 million** – average cost of testing, evaluation, EPA registration, and label approval
- **1 in 140,000** – number of potential products that successfully makes it from the lab to the market

The Label is the Law

- EPA oversees label development for each registered product
- Label contains explicit directions for use
- Additional tests and re-registration are required
- Use of a product in a manner not specified on the label is against the law

Specific Benefits of Pesticide Use

Controlling Cockroaches

- Roaches produce many harmful allergens
- Linked to Asthma in children
- Transmit a variety of digestive tract disorders
- Pesticides help manage these health threats



Controlling Mosquitoes

- Mosquitoes carry and spread a host of diseases
- West Nile virus, malaria, dengue fever and encephalitis can all be deadly
- Pesticides help control populations in high-risk areas



Reducing Risk of Rodents

- 45,000 people are treated for rat bites annually
- Rodents spread hantavirus, food poisoning, typhus and other diseases
- Responsible for fires, property damage and contaminating stored grain
- Rodenticides help eliminate this threat



Controlling Poisonous Plants

- More than half of all Americans are allergic to poisonous plants
- Poison ivy, poison oak, poison sumac cause severe skin rashes, irritations, itching and blistering
- Herbicides eliminate these weeds around homes and businesses



Taking Care of Termites

- Termites attack more than 600,000 homes each year
- Responsible for \$1.5 billion in property damage
- Termiticides protect homes, businesses and historic structures



Protecting Against Ticks

- Transmit deadly diseases – ***Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever***
- \$Millions in tick-related health care costs each year for people, pets and livestock
- Insecticides can reduce risk and protect against tick bites



Controlling Stinging Insects

- Responsible for more deaths than snake bites
- Fire ants send 60,000 Americans to emergency rooms annually
- Insecticides reduce risk of ants, wasps and other insects in public and private areas



Pesticides are a Necessity

- Pesticides are not a threat to people, pets or the environment when used properly
- Freedom to choose the products you want to use
- Part of an effective *Integrated Pest Management* approach

Pesticides are a Necessity

- All household chemistry, including pesticides, contributes to our quality of life
- You play an important role in maintaining our standard of living!



Thank You!

RISE

1156 15th St. N.W., Suite 400

Washington, D.C. 20005

Tel. (202) 872-3860

www.pestfacts.org

www.schoolpestfacts.org

www.westnilevirusfacts.org