



## Statewide Pesticide Application Notification System

### June 2022 Workshop Summary Report

The Center for Regional Change (CRC) at the University of California at Davis (UC Davis) facilitated three virtual workshops in June 2022 on behalf of the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR). These workshops provided stakeholders an opportunity to share feedback on the Statewide Pesticide Notification System that DPR is developing.

#### **Background**

DPR is in the development phase of the statewide system and is partnering with a number of County Agricultural Commissioners (CACs) who are conducting notification pilots to inform development of the statewide system. DPR is incorporating critical input from community members, growers, CACs, and other stakeholders. The department has launched a process for broad participation across California to collect input from the public to help inform the structure and design of a statewide pesticide notification system. The purpose of the state's pesticide notification system is to provide advanced, transparent and equitable access to information about pesticide applications. The statewide notification system will complement existing pesticide laws and regulations that protect public health and the environment.

This notification system will add an additional level of transparency and communication with the public and an opportunity to enhance education and outreach about the important rules and regulations in place to protect the health of fieldworkers and communities across California.

#### **Workshop Structure**

Three workshops were held virtually using the Zoom platform on June 27, 28 and 29, one each day. The three sessions were held at different times of day (specifically 10 a.m., 1 p.m. and 6 p.m.), to accommodate participation from a broad range of stakeholders with varying availability. Each session was conducted over a two-hour period and featured the same agenda as detailed in the following section. Workshop presentation, summary of next steps and question and answer (Q&A) sessions were interpreted into Spanish by a professional interpretation team and accessible to participants via a dedicated Zoom audio channel, and breakout rooms were facilitated in both Spanish and English. To encourage candid feedback, facilitators did not take

attendance and took notes without attributing comments to any individual or the group that the participant may have represented. Across the three workshops, there were more than 750 participants, with some individuals attending multiple workshops. A precise number is not available as registration was not required to attend the workshops.

## **Workshop Agenda**

- *Welcome*  
Instructions were provided on slides and orally for how attendees could access live interpretation in Spanish and live transcription. Introductory slides included information about the facilitators and guiding principles: (1) improve equity and transparency; (2) support public health; (3) prioritize by health impact; (4) encourage engagement and communication; and (5) complement existing laws/regulations.
- *Overview of workshop goals*  
The goal of the workshop series was to gather public input on proposed design elements of the statewide notification system. These elements were informed by previous public engagement discussions and comprehensive review by DPR.
- *Proposed design elements for statewide notification system*  
Karen Morrison, DPR Acting Chief Deputy Director, presented on the vision and the nine design elements of the statewide notification system.
- *Demonstration of Ventura pilot notification system web platform*  
Justin Tran, DPR IT Supervisor I, gave an overview of the pilot notification system being used in a pilot in Ventura County. This was in the form of a pre-recorded video played during the workshops.
- *Facilitated public feedback sessions*  
Clare Cannon, CRC Faculty Affiliate, provided attendees with guidelines for the breakout rooms and invited them to select one of three breakout rooms. During the first two workshops, two rooms were facilitated in English, and one room was facilitated in Spanish. During the third workshop, (the one held during evening hours), one room was facilitated in English, one room was facilitated in Spanish, and one room was conducted in English with live interpretation in Spanish. In each room, there was one facilitator from the CRC, one co-facilitator/note-taker from the CRC, and at least one representative from DPR. Each breakout room had approximately one-third of the attendees, typically representing up to 100 attendees.
- *Summary and Next Steps*  
Following the breakout room sessions, participants regathered in the main Zoom room, and one facilitator from each room provided a verbal report summarizing their breakout discussion. As in the beginning of the workshop, this was live interpreted into Spanish on the dedicated Zoom audio channel. DPR's Karen Morrison gave an overview of next steps, including the following steps:
  - Soliciting feedback on pilot projects in Riverside, Stanislaus, Ventura, and Santa Cruz counties in 2022;

- o Holding public workshops on pilot projects in Fall 2022;
- o Encouraging public participation during rulemaking hearings and workshops in 2023, and;
- o Holding public outreach events for the statewide system in 2024.

This agenda item concluded with information on how attendees could seek information or provide feedback outside of the workshops via email, a physical mailing address, or DPR's webpage.

- **Q&A Session**  
Bernadette Austin, CRC Executive Director, facilitated a general session question and answer (Q&A) period. She summarized key questions that emerged in the breakout rooms and facilitated audience Q&A. Karen Morrison responded to these questions and also answered questions that were highlighted and shared with her by co-facilitator notetakers during the breakout sessions.

## Summary of Stakeholder Feedback

The workshops provided information on the elements being contemplated for a statewide pesticide notification system, including the nine proposed design elements: (1) Anticipated Users; (2) Access to Notification; (3) Pesticides Included in the Notification System; (4) Notification Area; (5) Notification Delivery Time; (6) Language; (7) Delivery Mechanism; (8) Information Included in the Notification, and; (9) User Resources.

Participants of the workshops provided input verbally and in writing. This feedback is listed below under the nine proposed design elements of the statewide notification system.

In addition to feedback on the proposed design elements, workshop participants raised concerns about the length of time it is projected to take for the system to be completed. Participants also wanted to know when the public will be notified if the proposed design elements are approved. DPR has added responses to these additional questions in the revised FAQs on its [webpage](#).

## Workshop Feedback on the Nine Design Elements

1. **Anticipated Users:** Multiple participants voiced support for notifications that anyone can access, noting that users may include residents, schools, hospitals, and other community services. Written feedback from some community groups suggested the system needs to be available to anyone, without requiring users to provide any personally identifiable information. Some growers, in written feedback, stressed that notification should be limited only to those who are potentially subject to physical exposure, meaning only community members living within a given distance of the application.
2. **Access to Notification:** Participants generally agreed with the proposed options of searching for pesticide applications anonymously through a web-based platform or

subscribing for notifications. Some participants suggested an opt-in only system, while others raised concerns that entering identifying information would result in people not using the tool. Suggestions were also made to provide different avenues to receive notifications, including recorded messages sent to phones and communication applications such as WhatsApp. Multiple participants voiced support for an accessible, interactive map available on the internet. Participants also expressed that they want to be able to access information about all locations where pesticides are being applied across California. There were suggestions to simplify the system, by removing the address search function, to make it accessible to all. Participants raised concerns about potential users who cannot access Wi-Fi services in deep rural areas. A pre-recorded message sent to phones was one solution provided. It was also suggested that visual and audio aids should be provided for those who cannot read or write, and messages should be in multiple languages, including those spoken by farmworkers across the state. Participants requested a working group to address accessibility concerns. Some participants recommended Spray Safe (events hosted by local farm bureaus providing information to reduce spray, enhance worker safety, and protect public health) as a possible model.

3. **Pesticides Included in the Notification System:** Workshop feedback included that the statewide notification system should follow Proposition 65 and [BeeWhere](#) and include information about the pesticide being applied, such as if it has been banned in other countries, its list of ingredients, and potential health and environmental impacts due to possible exposure. There were suggestions that all harmful pesticides applied should be included in the notifications (i.e., all restricted materials, organophosphates, carcinogens, neonics, Toxic Air Contaminants, fungicides, and fumigants). Another suggestion was to list active ingredients in terms people can understand. In written feedback, growers generally agreed with the proposal to include restricted materials only. Community resident groups would like to include pesticides beyond restricted materials.
4. **Notification Area:** Multiple participants requested that DPR include the exact location of the application in the notification. Suggestions were made to provide a notification area greater than the proposed one mile-by-one mile resolution. Some participants suggested a range between two and 10 miles. Some participants want to be able to choose a mile range, such as what is offered in a radius tool in a mapping platform. Written feedback from community resident groups expressed that they would like access to a statewide map that shows all applications, while growers feel strongly that the system should only display application information to residents near where the application is occurring. It was pointed out during the workshop that some people move often and/or change contact information often, so a notification system that depended solely on assumed locations may miss people who would like to be being notified.
5. **Notification Delivery Time:** Workshop feedback included several participants suggesting a notification period ranging between 48 and 72 hours. Participants had questions about how applications with less than 24 hours' notice would be handled. Other participants suggested a longer period than 48 to 72 hours to allow for impacted populations to make accommodations. Some recommended five to seven days. In written feedback, growers expressed concern that submitting Notices of Intent to Apply (NOIs) more than 24 hours in advance of an application would put crops at risk and cause economic damage and

increase the risk of spreading invasive pests. They emphasized that growers need flexibility to do their jobs well and that extending the timeline will result in a significant increase in the number of waiver requests (emergency exemptions). Nearly all the community members' written feedback requested 72-hours' notice.

6. **Language:** In addition to English and Spanish, participants recommended notifications in the following languages: Mixteco, Triqui, Zapoteco, Korean, Ilocano, Punjabi, Tagalog, Hmong, and Chinese (Mandarin/Cantonese). Mixteco has different dialects that can be considered their own language, (i.e., alto, medio, and bajo). It is also not a written language, so participants suggested that audio access should be provided along with graphics (see suggestion on delivery options below). There were suggestions that [mixteco.org](http://mixteco.org), [crla.org](http://crla.org) and [centrobinacional.org](http://centrobinacional.org) could serve as potential partners for translation. The majority of participants agreed with the need for English and Spanish at a minimum and suggested using Google translate or translators for the top languages spoken in each county.
7. **Delivery Mechanism:** In workshop feedback, there were suggestions to consider text, WhatsApp, and Facebook as additional delivery mechanisms. Participants noted that some potential users do not have email addresses, including farmworkers and people directly in or surrounded by agricultural fields. Participants noted that potential users without smartphones could benefit from text messages, recorded voice messages sent to phones, and a call-in option. There were suggestions to utilize multiple communications outlets outside of technology and social media, including news outlets, flyers, ethnic media, and radio stations.
8. **Information Included in the Notification:** Participants suggested including the type of application scheduled to take place, (e.g., aerial, ground) and the precise location of the application. There were suggestions to provide information on what symptoms to look for in case of exposure, as well as what to do once exposed, and to specify whether people can be around the area or not at the time of application and how to minimize exposure. Participants also suggested including a "time window" that specifies how long until it is safe to enter the field after an application. Some participants expressed concern over sharing a start date, given the four-day window applicators have to begin an approved application.
9. **User Resources:** In workshop feedback, several participants suggested making an interactive map available online. There were suggestions to utilize visual aids for people who cannot read or write, which could be color-coded to indicate the degree of impact of an application. Additional suggestions included issuing urgent alerts for locations near schools, parks, health care centers, etc.; convening a community advisory group to communicate between DPR and communities; providing educational resources about pesticides, chemicals that can be harmful, their effects, how to avoid exposure, and what to do if exposed; and offering workshops to explain the purpose of the pesticide notification system and register people who are interested and want to be notified. More suggestions were to include information about the pesticide being applied, such as if it has been banned in other countries, what ingredients are in the pesticide(s), and what the effects can be if people come into contact with them; flag harmful chemicals found in the pesticides to be applied; and list active ingredients in terms people can understand. Some participants emphasized the importance of community outreach events to disseminate accurate information on the

existing regulatory system and pesticide application safeguards currently in place. They also suggested providing general materials regarding the regulatory system and complaint procedures. Some participants shared research and related resources, for example, studies on the potential health impacts of pesticides.