



“From the Director”

Brian R. Leahy, Director
Department of Pesticide Regulation

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Hello,

The first few months of 2014 have been exciting busy months for us at DPR as we continue stringent efforts to protect the environment when it comes to pesticides. Here’s a quick snapshot of some of the things that have been occurring.

Brian Leahy

Director



As you may have seen in the press, DPR has recently announced enforcement limits on a fumigant known as 1,3-D. This fumigant is an effective tool used to control soil borne pests for crops including strawberries, grapes, almonds, and walnuts--four of California’s top-ten valued farm commodities. It is also a known carcinogen.

After we received preliminary data from an air monitoring study, we decided to take a proactive protective step. DPR is not prohibiting the use of 1,3-D, we are limiting its application to 90,250 pounds for every 36 square miles in areas where use has historically been much higher. This will not only keep public exposure levels within acceptable limits, it will give us time to find solutions so California producers can continue to feed the nation and the world.



Examples of tainted Cactus pads quarantined by DPR.

As director of DPR I am constantly impressed by the dedication and commitment of all staff, including our enforcement staff. Due to the expertise and commitment of the [Pesticide Residue Monitoring Program](#), DPR recently discovered that cactus pads, imported from Mexico were tainted with an organophosphate-based pesticide, and were being sold in California. This pesticide, called Monocrotophos, has been barred from use in the United States since 1989 and had the potential to sicken people. Our staff diligently worked to remove all of the product it could locate from store shelves and distribution centers. We also warned retailers and distributors that distributing this tainted product is a violation. We worked with our colleagues at the CA Department of Public Health to issue an alert to consumers. This type of dedication to protect consumers (of all cultures and socioeconomic groups) is a classic example of the behind-the-scenes work that DPR carries out daily, yet the public often does not realize it.

Online Registration of Pesticides

One project the department is tackling is updating the pesticide registration process. California has been regulating pesticides since at least the 1930s and we continuously need to take advantage of modern technology and efficiencies. Our overall goal is to allow for electronic submission and processing of applications to register, amend, and renew pesticide products. DPR has already completed the Business Process and Design phase

of the project and is finalizing work on a Feasibility Study Report. The next step in the process is to draft a Request for Proposal. We anticipate completion of the Request for Proposal by spring 2015. Other states have implemented an online pesticide registration system, but their regulatory programs are far less complex than DPR's. DPR hopes to have the project completed and available for use by registrants by mid-2017.

Restricting Some Rodenticides to Protect Wildlife



[The LA Times editorial](#) on March 26, 2014, 'You Dirty Rat Poisons', is just one example of the recent coverage of DPR's decision to restrict second generation anticoagulant rodenticides. This [regulation](#) took a lot of work and persistence from staff and we received more than 23 thousand comments from the public. It applies to all pesticide products containing brodifacoum, bromadiolone, difenacoum, or difethialone as the main active ingredient. DPR is confident that the regulation will help to protect California's wildlife and reduce the amount of poisonings amongst non- target animals. One of the manufacturers of this product, Reckitt Benckiser, has challenged DPR in court, but we are confident that our regulation is legally defensible and it is a practical, sensible way for these products to be used in California.



Finally, DPR was heartened to hear that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is updating its [Worker Protection Standard](#), updating the 20-year old regulation to provide more protections to farmworkers from pesticide exposure. DPR welcomed this move as it essentially affords farmworkers similar health protections to those already enjoyed by workers in other jobs. California has the most robust comprehensive pesticide regulatory system in the country and affords more protection to farmworkers than most other states. The proposal includes several things that California has already implemented and DPR looks forward to working with stakeholders to address the rest. The 90-day comment period ends June 17, 2014. You can comment on [the proposal here](#).