



“From the Director”

Brian R. Leahy, Director
Department of Pesticide Regulation

Feb. 23, 2012

Message from New DPR Director: Looking Forward

It was an honor being sworn in Feb. 21 as director of the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) by California Environmental Protection Agency Secretary Matt Rodriquez. I was especially proud to have my wife, Tina Cannon Leahy, and her parents, Pauline and Jim Nevins, there to share this honor.

I am grateful to Gov. Brown for the opportunity to use my experience and skills to lead DPR. In my tenure as assistant director for the Department of Conservation's Division of Land Resource Protection, I worked closely with local government officials on complex land-use and resource issues. I know first-hand how state and local governments can work together to reach shared goals.

As a former farmer, I bring a solid understanding of production agriculture and the system that delivers food from the farm to the table. California farmers, who produce more than 50 percent of the nation's fruits, nuts and vegetables, need a range of options to efficiently and effectively produce crops.

As a lawyer, I understand and am committed to our legal requirements that are designed to protect the public, farm workers and the environment.

I look forward to carrying out DPR's mission to regulate pesticide sales and use, and foster reduced-risk pest management in both agricultural and urban settings through research, grants and recognition.

Since 1998, DPR has awarded approximately \$6 million to more than 60 projects that use integrated pest management (IPM) strategies to reduce pesticide use. IPM combines natural and preventive strategies that focus on long-term pest prevention and pose a low risk to people and the environment. Pesticides are used as a last resort and selected to remove only the target pest.

We will be awarding another \$400,000 in Pest Management Alliance Grants later this year. In addition, the proposed 2012-13 state budget includes a \$713,000 annual increase for DPR to support fumigant alternatives research projects. The intent is to build on previous research and encourage and support development of more environmentally friendly techniques, procedures and processes to control pests and comply with the federal Clean Air Act. The first funding cycle for the fumigant alternatives research grant program will be fiscal year 2013-14.

These grant programs are subsidized with special funds generated by fees on pesticide sales.

In addition to grants for projects that reduce pesticide use, DPR has recognized more

than 100 California organizations since 1994 with IPM Innovator Awards for their efforts to reduce risks associated with pesticide use and for sharing their research and methods with others.

I am amazed at the breadth of DPR staff experience, knowledge and education. I appreciate their professionalism and passion for the department's work that ranges from environmental monitoring to ensure our regulations are protective enough to assuring that pesticide laws are enforced fairly and effectively.

I look forward to meeting with DPR's diverse stakeholders to discuss our programs and listen to their concerns and ideas.

Contact: Lea Brooks, DPR Communications Director, lbrooks@cdpr.ca.gov, 916-445-3974