

getting things done.

20<sup>02</sup>  
Progress Report

## STAYING THE COURSE IN CHALLENGING TIMES

This third annual Progress Report from the California Department of Pesticide Regulation takes a slightly different approach from our previous editions. While the report summarizes significant events of 2002, we also wanted to review our work during the past four years. It has been a critical time in DPR's development as a regulatory agency. At the same time, we need to acknowledge some current challenges as we set DPR's course into the future.

Under the Davis Administration, we have matured as a full-fledged, environmental organization. When the California Environmental Protection Agency was created in 1991, one of its most important elements was the establishment of an independent department to regulate pesticides. We have done that and more. Today, DPR is recognized both nationally and internationally for the quality of its work and the expertise of its staff.

During the past three years, we have forged closer and more effective working relationships with our local partners, the County Agricultural Commissioners, as well as our Cal/EPA co-regulators for water, air, and waste management. We also have worked closely with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and our regulatory counterparts in Mexico and Canada, on issues of common interest. These partnerships reflect California's leadership role in agriculture and environmental protection.

As detailed in this report, DPR's accomplishments have spanned a broad range of issues and activities. Our Enforcement Branch completed a five-year assessment of industry compliance with safety regulations, and the Legislature expanded our oversight of local enforcement programs. We launched an integrated pest management program to help schools reduce their use of pesticides, and distributed more than \$ 8 million in grants to promote IPM projects on the farm and in urban neighborhoods. We took regulatory actions to impose the nation's toughest restrictions on fumigants, protect the composting industry from pesticide contamination, and restrict the use of a rice herbicide that threatened other crops.

At the same time, we streamlined the process of bringing new, reduced-risk products to market, and introduced time-saving, online services for licensees.

As the state's fiscal situation declined in 2002, we were forced to curtail or suspend many initiatives undertaken during the previous three years. It was a difficult task, but we had already begun scrutinizing our resources. Under a legislative directive, DPR plans to issue a report on long-term funding options early in 2003. The stakes are high. Despite our state's current fiscal problems, California needs a vigorous, effective DPR to protect our environment and promote our economy. Ultimately, our progress will be measured not by what we have done in the past, but what we pledge for the future.



**Paul Helliker**, *Director*