



# HOW CONTINUOUS EVALUATION INFORMS DPR ACTIONS TO MITIGATE PESTICIDE RISKS

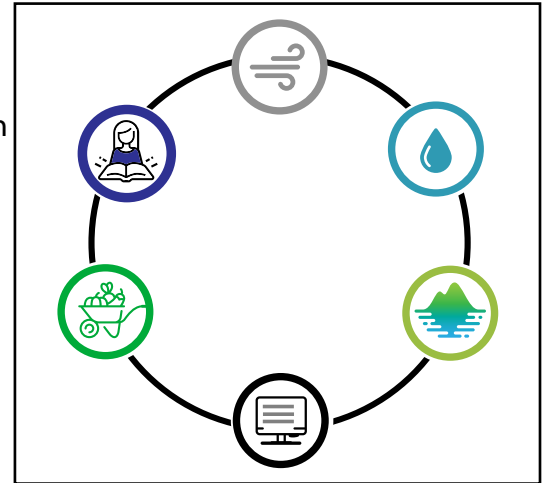
Following California's evaluation and registration of a pesticide for use or sale in the state, the Department of Pesticide Registration (DPR) conducts a process called **continuous evaluation** to address new information about pesticide risks and impacts on human health and the environment. DPR uses this information to assess potential risks from pesticide use and to inform mitigation measures.

## How does DPR assess pesticide risks?

California law requires DPR to continuously evaluate registered pesticides. This process includes the ongoing review of scientific research, data collected through DPR programs, and the investigations conducted by County Agricultural Commissioners.

Continuous evaluation programs include:

- Review and evaluation of data and literature, including studies and public submissions of data to inform DPR scientific evaluations of pesticide risks and impacts.
- Monitoring for pesticides in the air, ground water and surface water and ecosystems and measuring the detections against health protective screening levels.
- Worker exposure studies to model potential sources of exposure to pesticides and the impact of mitigation measures on decreasing potential exposure.
- Tracking the pesticides used in the state through Pesticide Use Reports, which includes detailed reporting on the quantity and type of pesticides used in agricultural and some non-agricultural settings across the state. As use rates for certain pesticides increase, more pesticides are included in our monitoring work or studies on use and application methods to incorporate emerging information on risks or impacts.
- Collecting fresh produce and testing for pesticide residue in food, measuring the detections against federal health protective screening levels.
- Investigating reported pesticide illnesses that comes in through physician reports, California Poison Control and County Agricultural Commissioner reports.



## How does continuous evaluation inform department actions?

When a risk is identified, DPR can take immediate action to regulate the pesticide, adopt mitigation measures or work to change the label requirements to reduce the potential for exposure. DPR may also determine that more data is needed to evaluate risks and inform mitigation measures, which could include initiating a targeted risk assessment to quantify risk or determine if mitigation is effective or launching a formal reevaluation to collect additional data to inform department actions.

### DPR actions to assess risk can include:

- **Risk assessments** to identify or quantify risks. A human health or ecosystem risk assessment can determine the significance of an adverse impact to inform mitigation actions such as label or use changes, permit conditions or other regulatory changes. Risk assessments can be narrowly tailored, for example in response to elevated residues on produce, or they can evaluate a wider range of human health impacts. Risk assessments are informed by DPR's continuous evaluation as well as external scientific research.
- **Reevaluation** to investigate a pesticide that may have caused or is likely to cause a significant adverse impact on people or the environment. This formal statutory process provides DPR the authority to request registrants to generate new scientific data to better understand and characterize pesticide risks. DPR evaluates the data and determines if there are ways to reduce or eliminate significant adverse impact associated with the use of the pesticide. A reevaluation can take years to complete. The duration varies considerably depending on the complexity of the generation of new data, the number of sites where products are used, the number of products containing that specific active ingredient, and data gaps.

DPR maintains a nimble approach to respond to emerging issues related to pesticide use and impacts, which is informed by changes in pesticide use, monitoring detections, new studies on pesticides risks and impacts and other data. The priority pesticide process reference in the Governor's proposed budget, released Jan. 10, 2024, will formalize the department's processes for categorizing risks.

## What actions can DPR take when risks are identified?

DPR's actions can range from focused training, label changes, adopting mitigation measures through rulemaking or moving to cancel a product. Actions can be informed by risks identified through continuous evaluation, risk assessments, reevaluation or other information. As the need for use restrictions are identified DPR also considers the availability of effective alternatives and the need for their development.

- **Expanding training for pesticide applicators to reduce potential incidents.** Focused training conducted by DPR or in partnership with growers, groups such as SpraySafe or County Agricultural Commissioners can be effective if issues are identified with applications or misinterpretation of label requirements that increase the potential for pesticide exposure.
- **Label changes to mitigate potential exposure.** DPR can work with U.S. EPA and pesticide manufacturers to update label requirements, for example, changing how a pesticide can be applied, the personal protective equipment to use when applying or restricted entry intervals.
- **Regulatory changes to mitigate known risks.** DPR can propose and adopt regulations establishing specific sale and use requirements or designate a pesticide as a "restricted material," which adds restrictions on a pesticide's use.
- **Cancellation of a product's use.** If a significant adverse impact is identified, and no mitigation is possible, DPR can cancel the product's registration, meaning it can no longer be used in California.