

October 2007



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The Windssock

Benefits of Crop Protection Technologies on Canadian Food Production, Nutrition, Economy and the Environment.

Safefood Consulting Inc. prepared a report on the benefits of crop protection technologies in Canada. The following article is an Executive Summary of this report. The entire report can be found at http://www.croplife.ca/foodforthought/media/media_02.php

Pesticides are defined as any product, device, organism, substance or thing that is manufactured, represented, sold or used as a means for directly or indirectly controlling, preventing, destroying, mitigating, attracting or repelling any pest. Canadians have benefited greatly from pesticides used in agriculture.

Economic and Agronomic Benefits

The most obvious benefits of agricultural pesticides are experienced by farmers. Pesticides, along with fertilizers and hybrid seeds, have enabled farmers to increase agricultural productivity and efficiency over the last 50 years, lowering production costs and thus increasing yields and profits. Farmers use pesticides in order to enhance crop yield, both in quality and quantity. Pesticides can prevent and manage outbreaks of crop pests or diseases, protect yields, reduce post harvest losses

and improve food quality during storage and transportation. Pesticides also reduce the need for expensive human labour and contribute to a stable, predictable food supply. Consumers in Canada and the United States are able to enjoy an abundant and relatively inexpensive supply of food. Without pesticides food production would drop and food prices would rise. Consequently, farmers would be less competitive in global markets with crop exports dropping, crop imports rising and potential job losses. Pesticides have both direct and indirect benefits on trade in agricultural commodities and, subsequently, the Canadian economy.

Human Health Benefits

Pesticide use has resulted in increased availability and variety of low-cost, fresh fruits and vegetables in Canada year round. This has had a significant impact on human health because there is strong evidence that increased consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables is associated with a reduced risk of chronic disease, including many cancers. The general public is concerned with pesticide use and the safety of the

food supply; scientific evidence on the effects of pesticide use and pesticide exposure on human health is widely conflicting. In general, exposure to mixtures of pesticides at low doses of the individual constituents has not been found to represent a significant source of concern to human health. There has also been evidence from many countries showing that the risks from pesticides in food are relatively low. In Canada, Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) is primarily responsible for regulating pesticides and ensuring that pesticides registered for use do not pose undue risks to human health or the environment. Surveys of Canadian produce have shown that, for the most part, the use of agricultural chemicals has complied with recommendations and safety regulations. Pesticides also play a role in enhancing the safety of the food supply by reducing levels of natural toxins such as mycotoxins and reducing the potential for contamination of fresh produce by food borne human pathogens. Pesticides also act as a tool to control vector borne

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ALBERTA AERIAL APPLICATORS ASSOCIATION
37th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
November 19-20, 2007

Monday, November 19, 2007

9:00 a.m.	Registration Desk Open
9:30 – 10:00 a.m.	Coffee Break
10:00 – 12:00 p.m.	AAAA Annual General Meeting
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch with Exhibitors
1:00 – 2:00 p.m.	Wild Rose Protective Fund Annual General Meeting
	MEMBERS ONLY
2:00 – 2:30 p.m.	Coffee Break with Exhibitors
2:30 – 3:30 p.m.	“Now That You Have a Medical Certificate, How Do You Keep It?” Dr. Jay Danforth, Regional Aviation Medical Officer, Transport Canada <i>(1 Human Health Credit)</i>
3:30 – 4:00 p.m.	Coffee Break with Exhibitors
4:00 – 5:00 p.m.	Legislative Updates & Issues Jock McIntosh, Alberta Environment <i>(1 Regulation Credit)</i>
5:00 – 6:30 p.m.	Reception with Exhibitors
6:30 p.m.	Dinner Entertainment Silent Auction

Tuesday, November 20, 2007

8:00 – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast with Exhibitors
9:00 – 10:00 a.m.	CPR Introduction & Demonstration Safety Training Centre <i>(1 Emergency Response Credit)</i>
10:00 – 10:30 a.m.	Coffee Break with Exhibitors
10:30 – 11:30 a.m.	CPR Introduction & Demonstration (Part II) Safety Training Centre <i>(1 Emergency Response Credit)</i>
11:30 a.m.	Closing

Sponsorship Opportunities

If you are interested in sponsoring an event, donating an auction item or exhibiting at the AGM please contact Emily Hoffman at the AAAA office at 780-413-0079 for further information.

A special room rate of \$98.00 per night has been negotiated with the Red Deer Lodge in Red Deer, Alberta. Call 1-800-661-1657 or 1-403-346-8841 by **October 31, 2007** in order to receive the guaranteed room rate. Be sure to indicate that you are an Alberta Aerial Applicators Association delegate.

Complete the attached AGM registration form and return to the AAAA office by **November 9, 2007** to receive the Early Bird Registration Rate.

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diseases such as West Nile Virus, Lyme disease and malaria.

Environmental Benefits

Biodiversity serves as a critical source of genetic material for agriculture, allowing the development of new and improved crop varieties. The single most important reason for the loss of biological diversity and deforestation is the loss of habitat and the conversion of land for agricultural use and urban development. Technological improvements, including the development and improvement of chemical pesticides, have contributed to the preservation of wilderness in North America over the past 50 years, allowing for an increase in the amount of food that could be produced per hectare of land. Although the value of conservation tillage has been recognized for some time, developments in the formulation and application of herbicides in the past 50 years has encouraged its adoption. Less intensive tillage provides significant savings in labour, fuel and machinery costs and improved moisture retention in the soil. Returning residue to the soil has converted many soils from "sources" to "sinks" for atmospheric carbon dioxide, a factor in global climate change. Finally, pesticides play an important role in reducing risk when used to enforce quarantines and, thereby, prevent the establishment of invasive pests. Treatments can be applied at the source or at the point of entry. *Invasive alien species* are those harmful alien species whose introduction or spread threatens the environment, the economy, or society, including human health. Pesticides play an important role in the control of invasive species and the enforcement of quarantines to help prevent the establishment of invasive pests.

Social Benefits

In addition to health, environmental or economic benefits through the use of pesticides, there are some social benefits, primarily to consumers and citizens, including rural populations. Increased agricultural efficiency has facilitated the development of industry and commerce in Canada thus contributing to reduced rural poverty. The use of pesticides, particularly herbicides has also had an impact on farm worker health and welfare by reducing manual labour requirements. Weeding by hand can result in substantial risks of back injury from constant and repetitive labour in a stooped position. Pesticides have contributed to overall improvements in food quality and shelf life which are important to Canadian consumers. Improvement in food quality and shelf life has also

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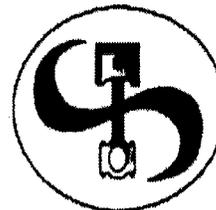
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increased the availability of fresh produce between harvest seasons and lowered the cost of producing commodities such as grain. In general, pesticides have contributed to the lowering of food production costs thus passing cost savings on to consumers. Consumers also benefit from the use of household pesticides. In addition to aesthetic benefits, pesticides help protect allergy sufferers, maintain clean, safe swimming pools and protect people from insect bites and stings.

Conclusion

While pesticides provide many diverse benefits, they may also pose a risk to human health, society and the environment. A rigorous, accountable and transparent regulatory system is vital to ensure the benefits of pesticides products continue to be realized while the risks are appropriately managed. Further, research into improving pest control technologies is necessary to ensure the economic viability while reducing the environmental footprint of agriculture through the development of newer, safer products and overcoming pest resistance. In general, the use of pesticides in agriculture provides: increased yields, increased farming efficiency, increased availability of fruits and vegetables; a reliable supply of low-cost food and fibre for consumers, improved food quality and food safety, decreased loss of food during transport and storage, improved soil conservation, and ultimately helps to provide a stable and predictable food supply.

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**Register Now for the AAAA
Annual General Meeting &
Convention and earn 4
License Re-certification
credits. See Page 2 for further
details.**

Calendar of Events

October 24 – 26, 2007

SAAA & PPF AGM
Saskatoon Inn
Saskatoon, SK

October 29, 2007

CAIR Board Meeting
Hilton Suites Hotel
Winnipeg, MB

Oct 31 – Nov 2, 2007

CAAA Fall Board Meeting
& Government Meetings
Radisson Hotel
Ottawa, ON

November 19 – 20, 2007

AAAA & WRF AGM
Red Deer Lodge
Red Deer, AB

December 10, 2007

CAAA Winter Board Meeting
Silver Legacy Hotel
Reno, NV

December 11 – 13, 2007

NAAA Convention
Silver Legacy Hotel
Reno, NV

December 31, 2007

CAAA Award Nomination Deadline

February 20, 2007

CAAA Spring Board Meeting
Marriott Harbourfront Hotel
Halifax, NS

February 21 – 23, 2008

CAAA Convention & Tradeshow
Marriott Harbourfront Hotel
Halifax, NS

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