



Proposed Agricultural Worker Protection Standard: EPA Needs Your Input

Proposed Feb 24th Asking for comment/ [compare to state of maine](#)

Overview of proposed changes

Proposed changes to the Agricultural Worker Protection Standard (WPS) include:

- Increased frequency of mandatory trainings (from once every five years to annually) to inform farm workers about the protections they are afforded under the law, including restrictions on entering pesticide-treated fields and surrounding areas, decontamination supplies, access to information and use of personal protective equipment. Expanded trainings will include instructions to reduce take-home exposure from pesticides on work clothing and other safety topics.
- Expanded mandatory posting of no-entry signs for the most hazardous pesticides; the signs prohibit entry into pesticide-treated fields until residues decline to a safe level.
- First time-ever minimum age requirement: Children under 16 will be prohibited from handling pesticides, with an exemption for family farms.
- No-entry buffer areas surrounding pesticide-treated fields will protect workers and others from exposure from pesticide overspray and fumes.
- Measures to improve the states' ability to enforce compliance including requiring employers to keep records of application-specific pesticide information as well as farmworker training and early-entry notification for two years.
- Personal Protection Equipment (respirator use) must be consistent with the Occupational Safety & Health Administration standards for ensuring respirators are providing protection, including fit test, medical evaluation, and training.
- Make available to farm workers or their advocates (including medical personnel) information specific to the pesticide application, including the pesticide label and Safety Data Sheets.
- Additional changes make the rule more practical and easier to comply with for farmers.
- Continues the exemptions for family farms.

MVSFGA

MVSFGA is an association of vegetable and small fruit growers dedicated to the promotion and advocacy of the vegetable and small fruit industry in Maine.

MVSFGA supports research education, and promotion and political advocacy. The association has provided important testimony at legislative hearings on such issues as pesticide regulation, labor, IPM, farmland preservation and technology transfer.

MVSFGA members receive the annual New England Vegetable Production Guide, and the New England Small Fruit Production Guide. Members also receive the association newsletter. To become a member of the MVSFGA please write to; William Jordan Jr. Treasurer, 21 Wells Road, Cape Elizabeth, Maine 04107,
email: whjir30@aol.com

Letters, comments, articles, calendars of events listings, and advertisements related to vegetable and small fruit production are welcome. Please send comments and information for the newsletter to: Walter Goss, 311 Elm Street, Mechanic Falls, Maine 04256, *email:* gossfarm@roadrunner.com.

MVSFGA Directors are : Bill Bamford (president), Lauchlin Titus (vice-president), William Jordan (Treasurer), Ford Stevenson (secretary), Rick Belanger, Keith Harris, Jeff Spear, Jason Osborne, Tom Stevenson, Lisa Turner