

California Citrus Quality Council

Dear Ms. Henderson:

Re: DPR 23-003 Statewide Notification of Agricultural Use of Restricted Materials
(Modified Regulations) Proposal

The California Citrus Quality Council (CCQC) represents approximately 3,000 citrus growers and 80 packinghouses in California, who's total farmgate value of production including oranges, lemons, mandarins and grapefruit in the 2022-23 marketing year was \$2.2 billion. The California citrus industry employs over 21,000 people on a full-time basis. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the California Department of Pesticide Regulations' (CDPR) proposed modified regulations on statewide notifications for restricted use pesticides. We believe that the proposal needs to be refined before it is finalized.

It should be acknowledged by CDPR that current pesticide application requirements and agricultural practices including for example, spray drift label restrictions and the use of best management practices, already provide substantial protection to bystanders from potential pesticide residues. However, our industry is not opposed to consideration of other practical measures that could be implemented to provide an additional margin of safety to bystanders as long as a grower and applicator's ability to make pesticide applications in accordance with the law, are protected.

When considering the additional notification system, CCQC strongly recommends that the specific site where a pesticide application may be conducted is not identified. Any notification requirement to identify the application site should not be less than one mile from the application site. This limitation would protect growers and applicators from the type of harassment that they have already experienced when pesticide application sites are specifically identified.

The expressed intent of the notification system is to provide potential bystanders notice of applications so, if they choose, they can take additional steps to limit or avoid potential exposure. We would note that the substantial safety reviews by CDPR and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency associated with evaluating the use of a chemical, already include requiring use restrictions to help assure that bystanders are adequately protected from potential exposures.

We support CDPR and EPA conducting these assessments and creating label requirements that reflect protecting the health of potential bystanders.

However, we know from previous experience that some members of the public intend to misuse the notification system, to identify growers or applicators for bullying and harassment with the intent of disrupting or stopping pesticide applications. Since the notification process will put growers and applicators at risk for this type of behavior, we strongly recommend that CDPR include a mechanism in the notification regulations to both protect the identities of the growers and applicators to help minimize the potential for them to be harassed in their activities, as well as implement measures to discourage abuse such as establishing fines for disrupting lawful applications.

We appreciate this opportunity to comment on this important matter.

Sincerely yours,
James R. Cranney, Jr.
President

Submitted electronically to dpr23003@cdpr.ca.gov

August 1, 2024

Ms. Julie Henderson
Director
California Department of Pesticide Regulation
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

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Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JRCranney Jr". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

James R. Cranney, Jr.
President

cc: CCQC Board of Directors