

## Training Module: Reading Pesticide Labels

**Objective:** To read and understand pesticide labels before using the chemicals.

**Trainer's Note:** Pesticide labels explain how to safely apply the chemical. For this training module show some labels and discuss what they say, how to use the information and why it is important.

**NOTE:** Do not use the label on an open container for demonstration purposes. Get some sample labels from a dealer or use unopened pesticides.

### Background

Before applying pesticides, know what the label says! The chemical formulation, signal word, precautionary statements, personal protective equipment statements, application method, and the projected length of exposure are indicated on the label. By reading and understanding the label, pesticides can be used safely and correctly.

### Read the Label:

- **Before purchasing the pesticide.** It must be registered for your intended use, and you must make sure there are no restrictions that would prohibit its use.
- **Before mixing and applying the pesticide.** Understand how to mix and safely apply the pesticide, and know the first aid needed if an accident should occur.
- **When storing pesticides.** To prevent breakdown, contamination, and fire hazards know how to properly store pesticides. The farm chemical storage center should also be securely locked.
- **Before disposing of unused pesticide and empty containers.** To prevent environmental contamination and human health hazards.

### The Label Contains:

- **Brand name.** The name given to the pesticide by the manufacturer.
- **Chemical name.** The name given to the pesticide by chemists to describe the chemical structure.
- **Common name.** For clarity, most pesticides have an assigned official common name. Common names and brand names are not the same and not all labels will list a common name. For example, diazinon is a common name.
- **Formulation.** Pesticide labels always list the formulation type, such as emulsifiable concentrate, wettable powder, or soluble powder.
- **Ingredients.** The label lists the percentage of active and inert ingredients by weight. Inert ingredients are those components that do not have pesticidal action.
- **Contents.** Labels list the net contents, by weight or liquid volume, contained within the package.
- **Manufacturer.** The label always has the name and address of the manufacturer of the product on it.
- **Registration and Establishment Numbers.** The numbers assigned by the EPA and other registering agencies such as the state.

- **Signal Word.** Part of the registration process assigns each pesticide to a toxicity category and prescribes which signal word must be used on the label.

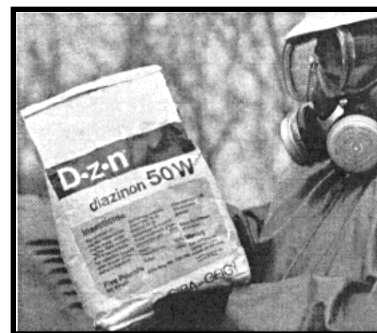
<u>Category</u>	<u>Signal Word on Label</u>
High Toxicity	DANGER
Moderately Toxic	WARNING
Low Toxicity	CAUTION
Relatively Non-Toxic	NONE

- **Precautionary statements.** Describes the hazards associated with the chemical. It tells why the pesticide is hazardous, what adverse effects may occur, and describes the type of protective equipment that must be worn while handling the pesticide.
- **Statement of practical treatment.** This tells what to do in case of accidental exposure.
- **Statement of use classification.** Pesticides are classified by the Environmental Protection Agency as either "General-Use" or "Restricted-Use," based on the potential of the pesticide to cause harm to people, animals, or the environment.
- **Directions for use.** These instructions tell how to apply the pesticide, how much to use, where to use the material, when it should be applied, and also included the preharvest interval for all crops whenever appropriate.
- **Misuse statement.** This reminds users to apply pesticides according to label directions.
- **Reentry statement.** Restrictions may apply to the time that must elapse before a person can enter an area treated with a pesticide. This reentry interval is included on the label or in state regulations.
- **Storage and disposal directions.** Improper storage of some pesticides may cause them to lose their effectiveness or even cause an explosion or fire. Directions for proper storage and disposal of the pesticide can be found on the label.
- **Warranty.** This information informs you of your rights as a purchaser and limits the liability of the manufacturer.

**The label is the law and must be followed.**

### Review the Following Points

- Always read the labels before applying pesticides.
- Know what the warnings are and what they mean.
- Understand the differences between toxicity levels.



### True or False Answer Key

1. F, 2. T, 3. F, 4. T, 5. T

**True or False**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Storage and disposal instructions won't be found on the label and therefore are unimportant. | T | F |
| 2. One should read the label to know how to mix and safely apply the pesticide.                 | T | F |
| 3. The common name is the same as the brand name of a pesticide.                                | T | F |
| 4. "Danger" on the label means high toxicity.   | T | F |
| 5. Read the label to find out what PPE to use.  | T | F |