



# Pest management programs support local producers and pesticide applicators

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## AT A GLANCE

**Pest management programs protect human health and the environment, along with reducing costs associated with controlling pests.**

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### The Situation

In Idaho, users of restricted use pesticides (RUP) are required by law to obtain a private or professional pesticide applicators license before they can apply these materials. A RUP is a pesticide that is available for purchase and use only by certified pesticide applicators or persons under their direct supervision. The RUP designation is assigned to a pesticide product because of its relatively high degree of potential human and/or environmental hazard if used incorrectly. Pesticide applicator licenses are administered by the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA).

To obtain a private or professional applicator license, applicants must pass ISDA proctored examinations to show they have adequate knowledge and prove a core competency level for the type of pesticide application that he or she intends to perform. University of Idaho Extension and ISDA work collaboratively to develop and implement educational programs to prepare applicants for taking these examinations. Once a license is obtained, the public can be assured the person applying restricted use pesticides is knowledgeable and qualified to apply these materials in a safe manner.

### Our Response

The agricultural pest management and pesticide safety UI Extension programming needs, in Canyon County, are diverse and necessary to address several areas of stakeholder concerns.

The Extension pesticide specialist collaborated with the Canyon County Extension educator to provide the following:

- **Pesticide safety pre-licensing classes.** Since 2009, UI Extension and ISDA have conducted a three day class for those individuals preparing to take the state pesticide exams. We utilize a traditional classroom style to teach the pesticide safety curriculum. The class lectures compliment the pesticide safety training manuals and allow for student teacher interaction and one-on-one instruction. The focus of these classes is to teach principles of pesticide stewardship and state examination preparation.
- **Pesticide safety recertification workshops.** We have conducted winter educational programs for licensed pesticide applicators on an annual basis for the past 15 years. These workshops provide licensing recertification credits for both private and professional applicators. These programs help applicators maintain their licenses.
- **Spanish language pesticide safety training for farm workers.** An annual class is delivered to Spanish speakers, entirely in Spanish. The students learn various aspects of pest management and pesticide safety. Additionally, they receive pesticide handler training and obtain a "handler card" when the training is completed.
- **OnePlan online pest management planning, educational and regulatory support programs.** This includes four programs; (1) Pesticide applicator recordkeeping (PAR), (2) Soil fumigant management planner (FMP), (3) U.S. EPA Worker Protection Standard (WPS) and (4) Integrated Pest Management planning and documentation by crop

and crop stages (IPM). These online tools were developed to assist producers in complying with state and federal pesticide requirements.

- PNW Pest Alert Network online and real time pest alert program. The website informs growers and allied industry about current pest outbreaks in crops from eastern Oregon, all across southern Idaho to eastern Idaho.
- Dry bulb onion pest management research. We developed drip irrigation and insecticide data for best management practices for onion thrips control.
- IR-4 minor use pesticide registration research. The University of Idaho field research center conducts magnitude of residue trials each year to support new pesticide registrations for Idaho's specialty crops. Collaboration with producers and commodity organizations in the western states is important for Idaho producers to have new pesticides available that meet global trade requirements.

### **Program Outcomes**

Farmers and professional applicators are more successful on the state pesticide examinations, with a 30 percent increase in passing rates. Assuming those who pass the examinations obtain a pesticide applicator license, we have increased the number of trained and certified applicators in Canyon County, Idaho. It has been shown that professionally trained pesticide applicators increase stewardship practices and the use of integrated pest management. The online programs have increased applicators recordkeeping and compliance in addition to reducing unnecessary pesticide applications. The research programs have increased producers' knowledge of pesticide impacts to water quality and soil. All of these practices help to protect human health and environmental conditions, along with reducing the costs associated with controlling pests.

### **The Future**

All of these programs will continue to be offered on an annual basis. Web based programs are available all the time.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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