

Talking Points

Glyphosate

UF/IFAS is committed to safety and supports integrated pest management as the first line of defense against weeds and other pests, including the use of glyphosate and other pesticides. We are monitoring developments in recent litigation to ensure that the University of Florida is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

Environmental Protection Agency Findings

On Dec. 12, 2017 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency issued draft risk assessments concerning the potential effects of glyphosate on human health and the environment. These assessments were publicized by EPA, which noted in a Dec. 18, 2017 news release that the draft human health risk assessment “concludes that glyphosate is not likely to be carcinogenic to humans.”

(<https://www.epa.gov/pesticides/epa-releases-draft-risk-assessments-glyphosate>)

According to the Dec. 18 news release, EPA is scheduled to publish its proposed interim registration review decision for glyphosate in 2019. The proposed decision will outline any proposed measures to reduce the risk of glyphosate use, if such measures are needed.

A package of risk-assessment material relevant to EPA’s review of glyphosate is available online. (<https://www.epa.gov/ingredients-used-pesticide-products/draft-human-health-and-ecological-risk-assessments-glyphosate>)

Within the package, one section relevant to job-related glyphosate exposure is, “Glyphosate Draft Human Health Risk Assessment in Support of Registration Review.” This section is 41 pages long and includes numerous references to past studies concerning glyphosate; it contains findings issued subsequent to the most recent EPA human health risk assessment, which was completed in November 2012. In that assessment, EPA officials conducted an open literature review and concluded that glyphosate should be classified as “not likely to be carcinogenic to humans.”

Proper Use of Glyphosate

Given the lack of any new evidence that would steer us otherwise, we continue to recommend glyphosate as a weed control tool. Users of products containing glyphosate,

or any pesticide, should carefully read and follow all label directions. The label will provide guidance regarding the clothing and/or personal protective equipment that should be worn to reduce exposure and, thus, reduce the overall risk associated with use of the product. The ultimate decision to select a particular herbicide for a particular purpose rests with the individual user (agricultural producers, homeowners, landscapers, etc), as do all management decisions.

Importance of training

UF/IFAS Extension provides opportunities for pesticide applicators to receive certification training on the safe and proper use of pesticides, including glyphosate. Many of these applicators are not required to receive training but do so voluntarily. Many of these applicators will pursue taking and passing the required certification exams to pursue a license issued by FDACS.

There were 1,224 new licenses issued by FDACS during the past year. There were 1,528 license renewals issued by FDACS during the past year. These applicators are required to pursue continuing education to earn their renewal. UF/IFAS Extension provides educational opportunities for these applicators to meet renewal as required by federal and state law.

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