



## Ontario's cosmetic pesticide ban:

### Key messages for agriculture

December 2008

The Ontario government is banning the cosmetic use of pesticides in the province, which began with the introduction of the Cosmetic Pesticides Ban Act in 2008. Ontario farmers support the banning of irresponsible and unnecessary pesticide use – but not the legislation and regulations as they currently stand.

### What are the concerns?

- **Lack of science**

There are no scientific criteria to explain why some products have been banned and others have not. All products have been approved as safe for use following extensive scientific review by the federal Pest Management Regulatory Agency.

- **Lack of independent expert review**

The Ontario Pesticide Advisory Committee, an expert committee of the Minister of the Environment, studies federally-approved products and organizes them into schedules to determine who can access which products. The ban removes the ability of this committee to review and report on ALL submissions for classification, giving a staff Director power to overrule any of the committee's recommendations and decisions prior to going to the Minister.

- **Loss of public confidence**

Banning pesticide products provincially overrides federal law. It also sends confusing messages to the public, affecting consumer confidence in our federal regulatory systems and the safety of our environment, water and food.

- **Loss of global competitiveness for farmers**

Provincial bans on federally approved products create regulatory uncertainty for developers of pesticide products. We anticipate reduced investment in product approval in Canada, putting farmers at a competitive disadvantage compared to their international counterparts.

- **Definition of agricultural land**

The proposed regulations for exemption define farm land as that which is zoned agricultural under the Assessment Act. However, a lot of land currently being farmed does not fall under that classification, such as land that might be zoned for development or future commercial use, or falls into a rural residential category.

- **Rural lawns and gardens**

Controlling weeds, insects and other pests in a farm lawn or garden or on neighboring rural properties is not cosmetic. If there is an infestation or other problem in a rural garden or lawn that happens to be next to farm land, it can easily spread to those adjacent fields, impacting crop yields and quality.

- **Lack of training**

There are no requirements for domestic users of certain pesticide product classes to prove they can read and understand a product label in either English or French, take any training in proper handling, use and storage of these products or be able to properly calibrate a sprayer.

## **What is agriculture asking for?**

- Delay the implementation of the regulations to thoroughly review the science and get it right.
- Exempt pesticide use on farm/rural lawns and gardens from the ban.
- Revise the definition of farm land to mean all land that is under active agricultural management and production.
- Maintain the independent review powers of the Ontario Pesticide Advisory Committee and have that committee continue to report directly to the Minister.

## **How can you help?**

Make your voice heard – by phone, fax or email.

- Your MPP
- John Gerretsen, Minister of the Environment  
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Email: [jgerretsen.mpp@liberal.ola.org](mailto:jgerretsen.mpp@liberal.ola.org)
- Leona Dombrowsky, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs  
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## **More information**

AGCare : [www.agcare.org](http://www.agcare.org) or 519-837-1326