



Amenity Forum Guidance Document

Best Practice Note for Pesticide Product Labels

Introduction

Users and advisors must be able to understand the label of pesticide products. Labels contain critical details of the way the product must be used. CRD approves (and requires manufacturers to include) the key information relating the safety and efficacy of products which appears labels.

Failure to follow certain instructions contained on the label is an offence. unsafe use of the product could harm human health or the environment. Labels can change frequently so it is important you read them before using or advising on the use of a product - even if it is one you are familiar with.

Type of Information Contained on a Label

Product labels contain four categories of information:

Product Identity

This enables users and other interested parties to identify the product and its intended purpose. It includes:

- Product trade-name;
- Product registration (MAFF/MAPP) number;
- Name and address of the authorisation holder and marketing company;
- Formulation type;
- Name and amount of the active substance;
- Identity of key co-formulants;
- Net quantity of product;
- Product batch number;
- Biological use phrase (for example, 'for the control of emerged weeds in industrial and amenity situations, in forestry and in aquatic areas); and,
- COSHH phrase ('The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) may apply to use of this product at work').

Statutory Phrases / Important Information

This information is contained within a box on the label. It lists, or directs readers to other sources of, certain key information that users of the product must comply with. It includes:

- Statutory conditions of use relating to the application of the pesticide to the target crop/situation. These include:
 - Field of use (specifying, for example, that the product is used only as an industrial herbicide).
 - Situations/crops in which product can be used (for example, natural surfaces not intended to bear vegetation, permeable surfaces overlaying soil, hard surface, etc).
 - Maximum individual dose. The highest dose at which the product may be applied at any one treatment. This is usually expressed as the maximum quantity to be applied for a given area of land.
 - Maximum number of treatments or maximum total dose. This restricts the total amount of product that can be applied to a specific situation over a given period of time (usually a year or per crop).
 - Latest time of application. This is the latest time a product may be applied to a situation/crop. This can be a: date (usually specified as 'in the year of treatment'; crop growth stage; or number of days or weeks before harvest).

- Other specific restrictions. These are any other necessary restrictions on the application of the product to a specific situation/crop (for example, a minimum interval between applications or concentration of product in a spray).
- A statement that the user must comply with these conditions and specific precautionary phrases;
- A statement that the user must read and comply with all other Safety Precautions and the Directions for Use.

Safety Information/Precautions

This area includes:

- Hazard symbol and associated risk phrases. These will be based on an assessment of data relating to the properties of the chemicals in the pesticide and their health effects. Products will carry pictograms of recognised [hazard symbols](#) and an appropriate risk phrase (for example “IRRITANT, MAY CAUSE SENSITISATION IN CONTACT WITH SKIN”) :
- Safety (precautionary) phrases to ensure safety of the operator and other parties, the environment/non-target organisms and storage and disposal. Some of these phrases are also statutory conditions of storage and use detailed on the authorisation issued by CRD – failure to comply with these is an offence (these will be marked up with a symbol such as a * or #). Phrases relate to:
 - Operator Protection, for example, specifying the use of Personal Protective Equipment or engineering controls;
 - Environmental Protection, particularly water and non-target organisms (for example, fish and bees); and
 - Storage and disposal, to ensure the safety of the product and container storage and waste management practices.
- Medical advice/First aid instructions. Where the toxicity of the product justifies it statements on first aid and guide to doctors or the poisons centre appear.

Directions for Use

This area includes detailed claims, recommendations and instructions for the use of the product for its intended purpose. It is possible to deviate from some of the instructions (for example, use of different water volumes, application equipment) if the user: does not exceed the statutory conditions of use; takes ‘reasonable precautions’; and makes appropriate COSHH assessments. Directions for use may be supplied on a separate leaflet if there are space constraints on the main label.

This area typically begins with ‘Restrictions’ or ‘Warnings’ so that readers can identify these readily without having to search through the rest of the section. This may include advice on the need for extreme care in avoiding spray drift or mixing in certain types of containers.

It may also include advice on:

- Pests/weeds controlled, for example specifying latest weed/pest growth stage or stage of the disease for effective control. This could provide general advice on the effective use of the product and include resistance advice/management strategy and any positive tank mixture recommendations.
- Mixing and spraying. This would include information on water volumes (if not specified elsewhere on the label), application methods, spray quality and the method for cleaning application equipment.
- Compatibility, listing ‘convenience’ tank mixes (those for which no specific recommendations and claims for use are made) and if required ‘positive’ tank mixes (for which specific claims are made in the Directions for Use).

- Specific agricultural, plant health and environmental conditions pertaining to use.
- All other information on product application which is required for safe and efficacious use.

Some labels may also contain Company Advisory Information. This is information which is not: required under the law; required to be supported by safety or efficacy data; in contradiction of any other part of the label. This may cover issues such as:

- Additional Health and Safety Information (for example: disposal of products, containers and spray washings; fire precautions, etc).
- Guidance relating to use of the product (for example, machinery calibration, nozzle selection, 'agronomic' advice, good agricultural practice, resistance issues).
- Other issues not directly related to use (for example, company disclaimers and trademark agreements).

Further Information

Manufacturers of products provide copies of their product labels on their websites [check if true in all cases].

It is a legal requirement to ensuring that pesticides are only applied by trained operators. Taking advice from a qualified advisor can help ensure that the product is used safely and to best effect.