



Postharvest Chemical Use Survey

United States Department of Agriculture

National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)

The Postharvest Chemical Use Survey, conducted each July by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), provides detailed information on how off-farm storage facilities use agricultural chemicals to preserve the quality of selected farm commodities. The commodities surveyed rotate from year to year, with oats and potatoes being the targets for 2006. Commodities surveyed in other years include corn, soybeans, wheat, sorghum, rice, peanuts, apples, pears and oranges.

WHAT INFORMATION IS COLLECTED AND HOW?

The survey is conducted among off-farm storage facilities – such as elevators, terminals and warehouses – that handle the targeted commodities during the survey year. Any facility is eligible to be sampled if it reported positive stocks of those commodities during previous NASS stocks or storage surveys. On-farm postharvest applications are beyond the scope of this survey.

NASS representatives contact facility operators to schedule an in-person interview during which data are collected on:

- the quantity of the commodities of interest handled during the year;
- the amount of the commodities that were treated with chemical applications;
- the name, amount and method of application of all chemical products applied; and
- the operation's pest management practices.

HOW IS THE INFORMATION USED?

The Postharvest Chemical Use Survey provides accurate, real-world chemical use data straight from the source. The information helps handlers and storage facilities document the chemicals they need in order to preserve the quality of key commodities as they move from producer to consumer.

The information collected is a critical component of the decision-making process for the federal Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA), helping the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency make informed decisions about pesticide registration, re-registration and product alternatives.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration and USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service use the data to document the safety of U.S. food products. Other users of the information include agricultural organizations, Congress and state departments of agriculture.

NASS publishes complete results of the survey each March in a report called *Agricultural Chemical Usage, Postharvest Applications*.

The information provided by survey respondents is **confidential by law**. NASS safeguards the confidentiality of all responses and publishes only state- and national-level data, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified.

Visit the NASS web site – www.nass.usda.gov – to see all NASS reports, as well as a vast array of other data on every facet of U.S. agriculture. Reports and additional information can also be obtained by calling the NASS Agricultural Statistics Hotline at (800) 727-9540.