



2006 Vegetable Chemical Use Survey

United States Department of Agriculture

National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)

The Vegetable Chemical Use Survey, conducted by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), provides detailed estimates of farm operators' use of chemicals on vegetable crops. The survey gives producers the opportunity to provide first-hand information on their crop production practices, thus ensuring that accurate, real-world data are available to help government agencies and others make sound decisions about the future availability of crop protection products.

HOW ARE THE DATA COLLECTED?

The Vegetable Chemical Use Survey is conducted every other year, alternating with the Fruit Chemical Use Survey. In 2006, NASS will conduct the survey in 19 states, collecting data for 29 targeted crops. Because of varying crop harvesting periods, the survey will run from October 1 through December 14. During in-person interviews with survey participants, NASS representatives collect data on fertilizer use, chemical use and pest management practices. Specifically, farm operators will be asked to provide:

- acreage of the targeted commodities grown during the year;
- targeted commodities treated with chemical applications;
- name, amount and method of application of all chemical products applied;
- details on their operations' pest management practices.

HOW IS THE INFORMATION USED?

Since 1990, USDA has been required to submit to Congress a comprehensive annual report concerning agricultural pesticide use. The survey helps ensure that USDA has the most accurate, up-to-date chemical use information, straight from the source – producers themselves.

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.

Accurate pesticide use data is the only way to ensure that producers continue to have access to the chemicals they need. Many of the pesticides used on fruits, vegetables and other specialty crops are classified as "minor use." In many cases, there are no alternatives to these chemicals. If growers do not accurately document their use of these products, the products might not be re-registered.

Agencies such as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service use the data to document the quality and safety of U.S. food products, providing assurances to domestic and international customers alike. Other users of the information include agricultural organizations, Congress and state departments of agriculture.

NASS will publish survey results in the *Agricultural Chemical Usage – 2006 Vegetable Summary*, to be released July 30, 2007.

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.