

## BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES PROJECT (AGRICULTURE): NORTHERN COLORADO FRONT RANGE PESTICIDE RECOVERY PROGRAM

Conducted by: Colorado State University Cooperative Extension  
Contact: Local CSU Extension Office  
Project Partners: Adams, Boulder, Larimer and Weld counties  
Contract Period: 1994-1996  
NPS Funding: \$53,500  
Matching Funds: \$44,950

The Northern Colorado Front Range Pesticide Recovery Program was designed to collect and properly dispose of banned, unusable or unwanted pesticides from agricultural operations in Adams, Boulder, Larimer and Weld counties, and to serve as a pilot program for Colorado.

Mismanaged pesticides present a potentially serious risk to water and land resources. Participating counties and agencies created a proactive strategy to identify and remove materials before containers failed or the materials were disposed of incorrectly.

A committee representing Colorado State University (CSU) Cooperative Extension, the four counties involved, weed and pest managers, agricultural producers and interested individuals met monthly to study and execute the program. The committee was co-chaired by CSU extension agents Ron Jepson and Karen Panter.

The first goal was to make agricultural producers and landowners more aware of proper pesticide inventory management and to inform them about the forthcoming recovery program. This effort included providing lists of banned chemicals and the presentation of liability issues.

The educational effort was conducted through soil conservation districts and commodity and producer group meetings. More than 3,000 fact sheets and 10,000 brochures were distributed via mailings or meetings. Additionally, copies of video programs, developed for similar efforts in other states, were made available to producers.

The second phase was the recovery effort itself. More than 6,000 pre-registration surveys were distributed to producers. The returned surveys then were reviewed, prioritized and verified for acceptance into the program.

Subsequent site visits included the identification and labeling of containers, as well as estimating their weight and recording

their condition.

To minimize the chance of accidents and make the program more convenient for producers, the waste contractor went to each enrolled site and removed the material. Each of these producers also registered as a hazardous waste generator.

Because the sites had been inventoried and organized prior to the scheduled pick-up, the waste contractor, ENSCO, was able to offer the service at less than half of the projected cost. As a result, the collection was offered to producers at no charge.

Most waste was transferred to a facility in El Dorado, Arkansas. Dioxin-forming compounds were shipped to the Aptus Incinerator facility in Kansas. Some products were transferred from the El Dorado facility to an Oklahoma landfill. Some mercury products were transferred to Canada for stabilization and landfilling.

This process was documented and complete by May of 1996.

In total, the ten-day recovery effort collected more than 17,000 pounds of banned, unusable or unwanted pesticides from 67 sites across the four counties. More than 90 percent of the participating producers said that they thought there should be a similar state-wide effort and that they would participate again if the program was offered.

During the recovery, an educational slide set was created for use in future programs. Five hundred sets of 75 fact sheets were also created and distributed. These binders, *Agricultural Hazardous Waste: Agent Handbook*, were provided to participants and interested individuals as well as to Cooperative Extension personnel, Natural Resources Conservation Service offices, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the Colorado Department of Agriculture.

