Teaming Up for Safety

Tips for Farmers Adjacent to Schools

When agriculture is practiced adjacent* to a school, both partners must work together to protect children’s safety, avoid community conflict and respect the farmer’s need to run his business. Here are some guidelines for growers:

1. **Establish a relationship with your neighbors**
   - Find out who is the appropriate contact person at the school and make sure all notification goes through that person.
   - Pay a visit and say hello. Exchange contact information. Provide, in writing, a general schedule of your farming activities. Request a copy of all scheduled after-school and weekend activities for the year -- and ask to be notified when schedules change.
   - Agree on a procedure to notify school administrators when a pesticide application is scheduled.
   - Provide the school with information on the potential health effects of exposure to the pesticides you plan to use over the coming year.

2. **Tell the school when you plan pesticide applications**
   - Send written notification to the contact person, preferably at least 48 hours before any application adjacent to the school. Follow up with a phone call to make sure the written notification was received.

3. **Work around the school’s schedule**
   - Whenever possible avoid applications adjacent to a school when school is in session. Make applications when the fewest people are present and have been notified.

4. **Choose and use equipment with extra care**
   - Use the appropriate hand or ground equipment properly adjusted to reduce off target movement as much as possible.
   - Consider using hand-held equipment in the several rows nearest the school.

5. **Other suggestions for use of pesticides around schools**
   - In blocks abutting schools, substitute less toxic materials and consider using orchard floor applications and non-foliar applications if feasible.
   - Make applications when there is a wind blowing away from the school to avoid drifting onto the campus even when the school is not in session.

* Adjacent is defined as sharing a common boundary, across the street, or within 300 feet with no crop or structure in between.

See the Ag Futures Alliance *Farming Near Schools: A Community Based Approach for Protecting Children* for a complete version of the Recommended Guidelines.
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Tips for Schools Adjacent to Farms

When schools are located adjacent* to agriculture, both partners must work together to protect children’s safety, avoid community conflict and respect the farmer’s need to run his business. Here are some guidelines for school officials:

1. Establish a relationship with your neighbors
   - Identify an appropriate staff person to establish and maintain an active relationship with the adjacent grower(s).
   - Contact person should request a meeting with the grower(s) to establish a working relationship. At the initial meeting, exchange contact information. Request a written summary of the activities that will take place on the agricultural property over the coming year. Give the grower a written schedule of after-school and weekend activities for the year.
   - Agree on a procedure for written notification before each pesticide application, preferably at least 48 hours in advance.
   - Request information on the potential health effects of exposure to the pesticides that the grower plans to use over the coming year.

2. Keep the grower(s) informed about your school schedule
   - Request that whenever possible pesticide applications be made when school is not in session, or when the fewest people are present and have been notified.
   - Agree that when scheduled school activities change you will provide a revised schedule to the grower(s).

3. Notify all appropriate people of the new relationship
   - The principal should inform all school staff, teachers and parents/guardians of the staff person responsible for maintaining the relationship with the grower(s).

4. Additional recommendations
   - Once every school year the principal and contact person should meet with a County Agricultural Commissioner staff person, the public health officer and the grower(s) to discuss procedures and share contact information.
   - The principal should assure that every teacher and staff member has the phone number for the County Agricultural Commissioner’s office in case of a pesticide emergency.

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