



# **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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