

## Pesticide Education Manual Available From Penn State

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre) — The way we use pesticides is changing, and training and educational programs are changing to meet these needs, a Penn State professor says.

"The days of indiscriminate spraying of pesticides to kill insects and other pests or to eliminate weeds are over. The trend today is toward more concern for the environment, our groundwater, and health and safety issues," says Dr. Winand K. Hock, professor of plant pathology and pesticide coordinator.

"People can still go to a garden center or hardware store and buy chemicals for general use, but to use a growing number of other pesticides requires state certification," he adds.

"Federal and state laws are changing, as are our attitudes toward potentially harmful chemicals. As a result, more chemicals are being added to the EPA's restricted use list and tighter controls are being placed on the people using chemicals."

In Pennsylvania, many farmers and all commercial (custom) and public applicators of pesticides are required to be certified. To make the licensing process easier for the

more than 3,000 Pennsylvanians who take pesticide applicator examinations each year, Penn State has published a new "Pesticide Education Manual," Hock says.

The manual is edited by Hock and Cynthia L. Brown, project associate with Penn State's Pesticide Education Program. It is a reference for pesticide users to prepare for the written exam, which is given by the state Department of Agriculture. The department bases its exams on the information in the manual.

"Since 1986, when Pennsylvania changed its law (Pennsylvania Pest Control Act of 1973), a greater number of pesticide users are now required to be certified," he says.

For example, interior plantscaping businesses that work in malls and office complexes are now required to have a certified applicator on staff. Anyone involved in commercial or public application of pesticides must be certified or be under the supervision of a certified applicator before applying restricted use or general use pesticides.

Restricted use pesticides are those that have been identified by

the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as presenting a greater potential to cause health or environmental problems for humans and other mammals, birds, fish or other life forms. General use pesticides, available in stores, may be used by anyone.

"There are more than 30,000 certified applicators in Pennsylvania," Hock notes. "In addition to the more than 20,000 farmers and other private applicators, many are state and federal government employees, pest control operators, golf course superintendents, landscapers and arborists, and aerial applicators."

Once certified, Pennsylvania license-holders are required to

continue their education through seminars, conferences and other programs, Brown says.

"Pennsylvania's regulations are stricter than the federal government's," she adds. "The state has a three-year cycle for maintaining certification, while the federal government is just now developing a program for a five-year cycle."

As more chemicals are added to the restricted use list and as state and federal laws change, more and more people are seeking certification, she says, and "there is no end in sight."

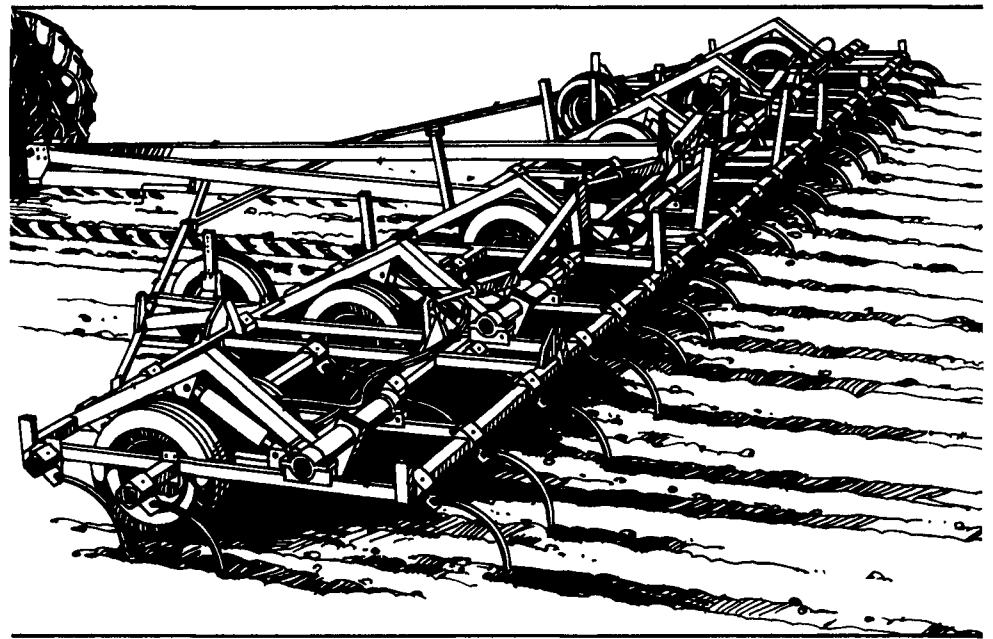
In addition to the "Pesticide Education Manual," Penn State offers a variety of other pesticide

education materials through the Department of Independent Learning.

The manual is available for \$14 (including postage and handling) and may be charged to a credit card by calling (800) 252-3592 (in Pennsylvania) or (800) 458-3617 (outside Pennsylvania). Other related materials are available at county extension offices.



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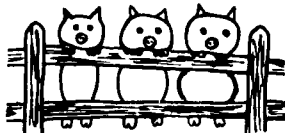
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