

# CROP CIRCULAR

CropLife  
SOUTH AFRICA

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**2024**



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## CONTRIBUTE

We are always looking for news, photographs or event updates from our members. Please forward your contributions to [elriza@croplife.co.za](mailto:elriza@croplife.co.za)

# WELCOME



**Rod Bell**

Chief Executive Officer  
CropLife South Africa

Greetings to all our valued CropLife SA members and industry stakeholders, We are currently well into our winter rainfall season and, to date, it has been a very wet and cold season. Water storage and farm dams in the winter rainfall region have filled up significantly in a short period of time, which is most welcome. However, the incredible rainfall in the winter rainfall season has impacted agriculture, causing physical damage to farmlands and infrastructure, as well as concerns around fields being too wet for machinery to enter for fertiliser and/or plant protection solution application. The very cold spell has had a devastating impact in areas of the summer rainfall region, where frost has destroyed vegetable crops in areas not normally affected by this weather phenomenon. Forecasts indicate a higher likelihood of a La Niña weather event for the coming summer rainfall area, so combined with the excellent rainfall received to date in the winter rainfall region, hopes for a great 2024-25 growing season are high.

At the time of writing, two of the three CropLife SA CropCon events have been successfully held (the third and final will be held in KwaZulu-Natal on 4 September 2024). The theme for the CropCon events this year is unashamedly 'compliance'. As highlighted in the event, there are multiple pieces of legislation that all players in the agricultural inputs value chain need to comply with – compliance is required whether you are a supplier, distributor, or farmer. Globally, there is increased pressure on formal agriculture and the use of pesticides, so it is no surprise that the efforts of activism in South Africa in our industry are growing. Activists target not only individual companies involved with primary agriculture but also lobby government to influence legislation. It is imperative for our industry going forward that all stakeholders comply with all relevant legislation. Compliance is essential if we

want our industry to remain sustainable and relevant to wider society in the future.

The CropLife SA team is also using the CropCon events to educate our members about the lesser-known legal requirements of the August 2023 regulation, in support of Act No. 36 of 1947, that was published by DALRRD. Many of these lesser-known requirements are not directly linked to regulatory matters, so it is imperative that CropLife SA members take note of these legislative commitments.

The CropLife SA series of webinars, hosted by a combination of CropLife SA team members and external speakers, continues to be a valuable source of knowledge transfer for role players in our industry. In addition, the CropLife SA team has reached a remarkable number of agricultural workers through efforts to provide training on the responsible use of pesticides and the use of personal protective equipment.

The CropLife SA container management programme goes from strength to strength, with a significant percentage of the HDPE plastic containers placed on the market by our members being collected and recycled. As with all other sources of information, there is a detailed section on the CropLife SA website where further information can be obtained on this critically important programme.

*Thank you for reading this edition of the CropLife SA Crop Circular, and please remember that should you have any stories you feel are worthy of sharing in our industry, please reach out to the CropLife SA team.*

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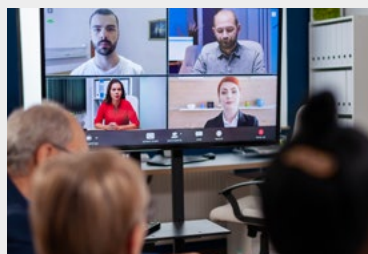
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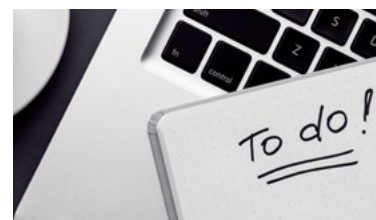
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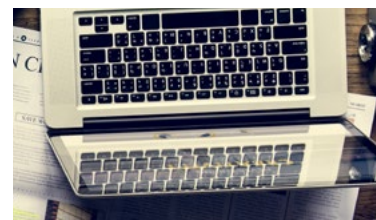
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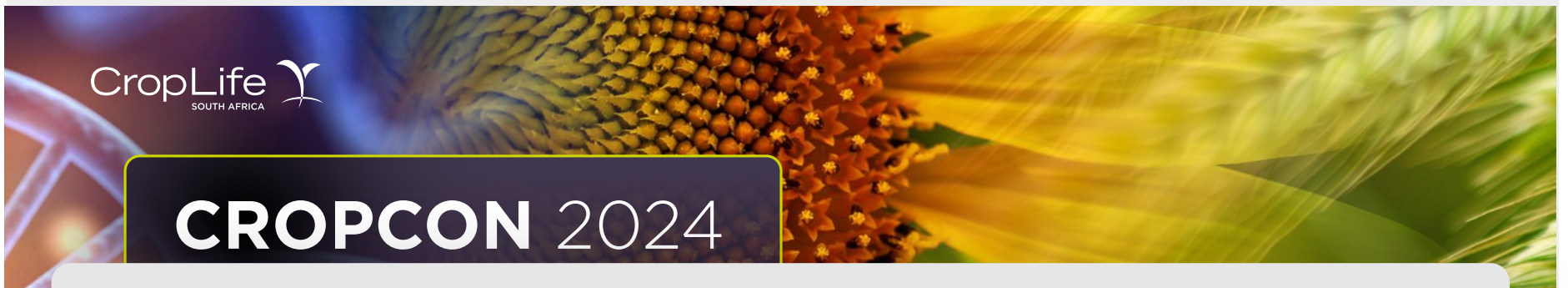
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# CropCon 2024



**The first two legs of CropCon were successfully held in Pretoria and Paarl in May and July respectively, and despite some severe weather conditions at the Paarl leg, the events were still very well attended in person and online.**

Both sessions were opened by CropLife SA CEO, Rod Bell, and at the Pretoria event, attendees were subsequently addressed by the Registrar of Act No. 36 of 1947, who urged compliance with the various regulations pertaining to our industry. The Registrar was joined by his colleague Elelwani Ramabulana, who provided practical examples of non-compliance that they regularly need to deal with.

This set the scene nicely for the CropLife SA team to inform our members of some of the various regulations and legislation that might impact them, including the Hazardous Substances Act, the National Road Traffic Act, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, and the National Environmental Management Act, to name a few. Elize Lourens from the Department of Employment and Labour also joined the discussions and gave an overview from the Department's perspective on the importance of ensuring employee safety in the workplace.





Prior to Elize's presentation, Ivor Price, co-founder and editor-in-chief of Food For Mzansi, set the scene beautifully, appealing to all those involved in the agricultural value chain to make farmworker safety a priority and ensure the necessary training, giving valuable examples from the CropLife SA and Food For Mzansi farmworker training days.

**Unfortunately, due to a lack of interest, the Bloemfontein and Mbombela legs of the CropCon roadshow were cancelled, meaning the final leg will be**

**the Durban event on 4 September. If you would like to register for in-person attendance, please RSVP on this link before 28 August: <https://forms.office.com/r/axMtFPn3XA>.**

Please remember that only in-person attendance qualifies for obtaining CPD points without the need to complete an assessment. However, the sessions will still be loaded on the CPD system once Durban is finalised, along with a short assessment for those who would like to obtain their points in that way.

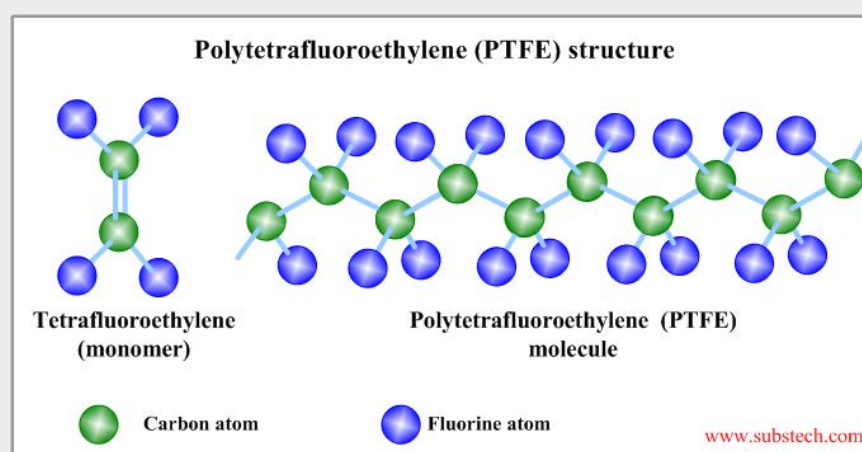
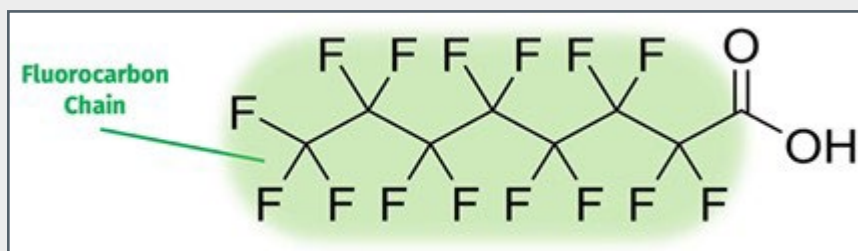
We look forward to seeing you there.

# The CropLife SA PRO's endeavour to recover all plastic pesticide packaging: ARE WE MAKING PROGRESS?

Dr Gerhard Verdoorn (Operations & Stewardship Manager)

**The global sentiment about plastic is heating up rapidly. Recent studies identified plastics not only as a mainstream environmental pollutant, but also the carrier of the so-called “forever” chemicals which are polyfluorinated alkanes.**

Two groups are identified as PFASs, namely per-fluoroalkyl substances and polyfluoroalkyl substances. The former are alkanes in which all the hydrogen atoms have been replaced with fluorine, while the latter have a few hydrogen atoms left amongst the multitude of fluorine atoms linked to the carbon chain. These substances are extremely tough and are virtually inert to physical chemical and microbial degradation.



Rigid pesticide packaging (bottles and drums) consists mainly of high-density polyethylene (HDPE), of which some are inline fluorinated and some are post-production fluorinated on the inside to protect the polymer from “attack” by the pesticide formulations. Scientific studies concur that inline fluorination does not produce PFASs in HDPE drums, while poor quality post-production internal fluorination produces a very small concentration of PFASs in the polymer. The latter is reason for concern as CropLife SA is aiming to reduce

the harmful effects of pesticides and all types of packaging on the environment and human health. Fortunately for us, South African pesticides are not largely dependent on HDPE drums with post-production internal fluorination. Consultation with the US EPA and US FDA gave us the comfort that our local pesticide HDPE drums are much less of a PFAS concern than food and cosmetic packaging, but it still gives us the ultimate objective to have our rigid HDPE drums PFAS-free.

HDPE is only one of several types of materials used for pesticide packaging. The CropLife SA Producer Responsibility Organisation (PRO) endeavours to recover as much pesticide packaging as possible from the agricultural, consumer and professional pest control sector to meet the targets set in the Extended Producer Responsibility Scheme for the Pesticide Sector regulations of the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment published in March 2023. HDPE is a highly sought after polymer in the recycling industry and the pesticide drums contribute but a drop in the ocean of HDPE used as packaging in South Africa. Polypropylene (PP) is used in flexible packaging (bags) and rigid packaging (tubs) for pesticides and is also highly favoured by the recycling sector. The problem child in the pesticide sector is rigid polyethylene terephthalate (PET) because the tinting (colour pigment whether white, blue, green, or whatever colour is favoured) “bleeds” out of the PET and the PET plastic cannot be processed with beverage grade PET because of the potential of contamination of food grade packaging with pesticide residues. Most beverage PET bottles contain recycled PET, but we cannot enter the pesticide PET into that line of recycling. The regulations as mentioned above set an expiry date of end of 2025 for the use of PET as pesticide packaging and CropLife SA members, of which 96% are subscribers of the CropLife SA PRO, are rapidly phasing out PET containers and replacing it with HDPE.

Low-density polyethylene (LDPE) is also used in flexible pesticide packaging, often as liners in PP or paper bags. LDPE is also one of the polymers that can be recycled easily and poses no challenge to the pesticide industry or recycling industry.

The main challenge that the CropLife SA PRO faces is that an uncomfortable percentage of rigid and flexible pesticide packaging is burned or buried on farms. This

malpractice not only causes unwanted environmental pollution, but also destroys a valuable resource that is the livelihood of many operators in the recycling industry. Along with this challenge, is the problem of pesticide packaging not being cleaned adequately on farms to render it nominally empty; this is especially true for flexible packaging that contains granular pesticides.

A question that is often asked is whether pesticide packaging can really be cleaned satisfactory by triple rinsing (rigid packaging) and spray rinsing (flexible packaging)? We would like to believe so, but the proof lies in analysis of triple rinsed and spray rinsed packaging, shredded material from both flexible and rigid packaging and extruded pellets (mostly HDPE). The CropLife SA PRO embarked on a programme to analyse these materials as part of the audit process to gauge the success of its triple rinse advocacy campaign. Results from different containers, plastic shreds and extruded materials provided the following results:

1. A 1 litre HDPE bottle that contained cyantraniliprole was properly triple rinsed, its residual contents were rinsed out with acetonitrile and qualitatively and quantitatively analysed with LC-MS/MS. The analyses revealed a detectable but not quantifiable level of cyantraniliprole (quantification levels are 0.030 mg/kg). This means the bottle had >99.99% of the cyantraniliprole removed by the triple rising process.



**Shredded HDPE arriving in the CropLife SA bulk bags at a recycling/processing plant.**

2. Shredded HDPE was subject to ethanol-water sonication and overnight extraction after which the liquid was evaporated under mild conditions, then extracted with acetonitrile and analysed by

LC-MS/MS. The total quantity of combined pesticide residue was 0.246 mg/kg, which means that the plastic had less than 0.00001% pesticide residue in it. Even if one takes into account that extraction and recovery of pesticide residues are never 100% successful, and work on an average success rate of 90%, the plastic was still very clean.

3. Extruded HDPE chips (this is HDPE that came from empty containers, went through a washing, melting, extrusion and post-extrusion heat-evaporation process) were subjected to the same process as described above. The plastic produced total residue content of 3.749 mg/kg, which means that it contains less than 0.00038% pesticide residue.

An interesting observation we made with the analysis of extruded plastic is that prior to the heat-evaporation, the extractable and detectable pesticide residues are less than after the heat-evaporation. This is not really surprising because the heating stretches the polymer chain which results in trapped pesticide molecules being liberated from the polymer, while unheated polymer keeps the pesticide molecules trapped in the cavities of the chain. What we learned from this is very interesting, namely that (1) not all containers are properly rinsed, (2) some molecules such as chlorpyrifos, metolachlor, tebuconazole and propiconazole are ubiquitous in HDPE used for pesticide drums and

(3) the CropLife SA PRO must do more to get better buy-in at farmer level on triple rinsing.

There are many CropLife SA certified recyclers who operate collection points for cleansed empty pesticide packaging. Packaging that is contaminated with pesticides poses a health risk to the recyclers and their staff and requires them to have hazardous waste management licenses to operate their recycling facilities.

The CropLife SA PRO requested all the recyclers to simply show people who deliver contaminated packaging the door because it is not their mandate to work with hazardous waste. Triple rinsed or spray rinsed empty pesticide packaging is not classified as hazardous waste and we therefore require that anyone who uses a pesticide in whatever packaging cleans such packaging adequately so that it can be used in the circular economy that keeps material in the industry and minimises waste.



***Contaminated flexible packaging poses a health risk to recyclers.***



***A very tidy empty packaging collection facility.***

# The Inaugural Compliance Forum

During the 1<sup>st</sup> stewardship forum of 2024, it was highlighted again that the distribution forums have been replaced by two compliance forums within the stewardship portfolio. Given that compliance matters are far-reaching, compliance forums are open to all CropLife SA members to attend. The 1<sup>st</sup> hybrid compliance forum was held on 28 May 2024 with 105 attendees. The highlights emanating from this inaugural forum are summarised below.

## THEMES & TOPICS FOR 2024

The stewardship portfolio will continue to build on the work already done when it comes to compliance with all applicable South African legislation by CropLife SA members. With that said, a practical approach with a business perspective will be important in conveying key compliance requirements, which will build a better understanding among members on why compliance matters. All CropLife SA member companies were encouraged to ensure that the right personnel are attending the compliance forums, in other words, those individuals who deal with operational compliance.

## DRAFT REGULATIONS FOR HAZARDOUS CHEMICAL AGENTS

Dr Louise Lindeque of Lindeque SHEQ Consulting Services, gave an excellent presentation summarising the current regulations for Hazardous Chemical Agents which are in effect and thereafter, comparing with the new draft regulations that were promulgated on 05 April 2024, Gazette No. 11687. The key new requirements in the draft regulations pertain to:

- (1) Conducting a documented hazardous chemical agent risk assessment immediately where a hazardous chemical agent is present in the workplace by a “competent person” which must be revised every two years.
- (2) An inventory of hazardous chemical agents used, handled or stored at the workplace.
- (3) Employee training to include the importance of biological monitoring and medical screening, as well as medical surveillance.
- (4) Record keeping (i.e., risk assessments, exposure monitoring, medical screening/surveillance reports, action plan and so forth).



Members were also encouraged during the 2<sup>nd</sup> stewardship forum to submit comments to the portfolio by no later than 28 June 2024. It was further stressed that comments deemed necessary will be incorporated into one document and submitted to the Department of Employment and Labour (DOEL) on 5 July 2024. This message was echoed by Dr Lindeque during her presentation, noting that all comments submitted by the affected industries will only be considered by the DOEL where valid reasons or alternative options are provided.

Given the above, it is important for CropLife SA members not to put the cart before the horse. Upon receiving comments, the DOEL will still have a lengthy process to go through before any final regulations can be promulgated. This is unlikely to happen in 2024 and with that the DOEL has made clear that they understand businesses cannot simply become compliant overnight once the new regulations come into effect, so a phase-in period will be incorporated. It is also crucial that CropLife SA members understand that, at present, DOEL inspectors expect compliance with the 2021 regulations. Finally, it is safe to say that how these regulations, once finalised, are implemented by CropLife SA members will vary given the diversity in operations – it will not be one-size-fits-all. The portfolio will continue to keep members updated in this regard.

“**An effective company product stewardship management programme that is aligned with the requirements of the GHS will assist companies to reduce risk and to manage the safety, health and environmental implications of their pesticide products effectively.**”  
*Dr Louise Lindeque*

## **CHALLENGES: HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES ACT, 1973**

Francois Nel, responsible for environmental health and safety at Laeveld Agrochem (LAC) gave a well-thought-out presentation on compliance challenges with Act No. 15 of 1973 from a distributor's perspective. He highlighted key operational challenges within the Department of Health (DoH), given his employment history with the DoH. More importantly, he outlined the challenges pertaining to the competency of inspectors, license issuing delays and the lack of state/private sector engagement. He closed by providing recommendations on the path forward.

Innovative ideas were highlighted on how home and garden retailers can ensure compliance with this Act, which have been discussed with the Massmart group and affected members. The ideas, such as transparent lockable cabinets behind a designated sales counter or a wire/mesh cage structure in a friendly home and garden concept, revolved around keeping products behind lock and key. The selective targeting of retailers selling certain home and garden pesticide products by DoH inspectors in specific areas was brought into the spotlight. Further, as to how DoH inspectors will determine Group 1 Category B products based on the new GHS labels was an excellent question that arose during the discussions.

Taking the above into account, the portfolio's commitment to resolving challenges for CropLife SA members was reiterated by noting the following:

- The Act in its current form is technically challenging.
- During inspections, we have become used to inspectors looking for red band products.
- However, with the new format GHS labels, there are no colour bands, so what exactly are inspectors going to look for? Are they going to look for a skull and crossbones pictogram only, or does the hazard statement or signal word also play a role?
- This is currently under discussion and clarity is required from DoH to ensure consistency among inspectors during inspections.

- Giving the advice to “double lock” (as referred to on the ground) all products with the signal word “Danger” is not practical nor accurate as other criteria may trigger the signal word.
- All red band products that were being kept behind lock and key, whether at the trade/business level or at the end user level, must still be kept behind lock and key, regardless of whether those products come with a GHS label.
- This at present is the best advice the portfolio can offer, particularly knowing that many inspectors are not yet fully aware or comprehend the new GHS labels.
- As the stewardship portfolio of CropLife SA, it remains our priority to reach out to the relevant official in the DoH responsible for this Act to obtain clarity on how inspectors will now determine which products are Group 1 Category B going forward based on the new GHS format labels.
- In addition, the current situation with delays in license issuing and renewals is not sustainable and likely to become worse for which answers will be sought.
- While draft regulations published under Act No. 15 of 1973 in 2022, are aligned to the GHS, this is yet to be finalised by the relevant section within the DoH. We will seek answers on delays and offer assistance to fast track the process.

Finally, while the portfolio does not have all the answers at this stage, efforts are underway to provide CropLife SA members with the most concise information and guidance. At present, the resources made available to members, as well as the guidance and advice provided will be sufficient to ensure members do not find themselves in contravention of this Act.

## **CONSULTANTS – ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (EIAS)**

The stewardship portfolio receives many queries from members pertaining to EIA consultants. For this reason, Belinda Clark, an environmental consultant who specialises in EIAs, was invited to provide advice to members on consultants who offer EIA services. The message was clear, consultants must understand EIAs in the context of the plant protection industry, be registered with the Environmental Assessment Practitioners Association of South Africa (EAPASA) and finally, be familiar with the process to obtain environmental authorisation from the Competent Authority.

## **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Other topics covered during the forum focused on (1) marketing and sales in terms of liability where advice is communicated verbally or through writing to end users (i.e., farmers) and (2) CPD compliance which was noted to be moving in a positive direction.

The current resources made available by the portfolio to members, particularly the importance of the comprehensive checklists, were reiterated. CropLife SA members were also encouraged to utilise the services offered by the human resources within the portfolio. Overall, given the attendance, discussions and comments, the first compliance forum under the stewardship portfolio for 2024, can be viewed as a success. The portfolio will now work to build on this success by putting together an attractive agenda for the 2<sup>nd</sup> hybrid compliance forum to be held on 23 October 2024 in the Western Cape. Once details are finalised, these will be communicated timeously.

**“ ALWAYS REMEMBER:**

**MONEY SPENT ON COMPLIANCE WILL PALE IN COMPARISON TO WHAT WILL  
HAVE TO BE SPENT IN THE EVENT OF A DISASTER. ”**



# Food For Mzansi AGRICULTURAL WORKER TRAINING DAYS

Ivor Price – Co-Founder (Food For Mzansi)

**Food For Mzansi, in partnership with CropLife South Africa, recently concluded a series of Agricultural Worker Days aimed at empowering farmworkers in the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, and Northern Cape.**

This report outlines the outcomes and impact of these successful events, highlighting the indispensable contributions of CropLife SA and, in particular, Dr Gerhard Verdoorn, operations and stewardship manager, and compliance specialist Quade Sing Jam.

## OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of Food For Mzansi's series of Agricultural Worker Days was to provide comprehensive training on

responsible pesticide management, with additional focuses on:

1. Emphasising the importance of wearing personal protective equipment (PPE).
2. Conducting free health checks covering diabetes, cholesterol, and HIV/Aids.
3. Offering democracy education in preparation for the national elections.
4. Enhancing financial wellness among farmworkers.

## RESPONSIBLE PESTICIDE MANAGEMENT TRAINING

The central focus of all the agricultural worker days was the training on responsible pesticide management, led by Dr Gerhard Verdoorn in all host towns, with the exception of Mthatha where the training was conducted

by Quade Sing Jam. This was crucial in addressing the significant gaps in knowledge and practice among farmworkers regarding pesticide use.

The CropLife SA sessions covered several critical aspects:

- **Correct application methods:** Farmworkers were educated on the proper techniques for applying pesticides to ensure effectiveness while minimising risks to themselves and the environment.
- **Storage and disposal:** Proper storage and disposal methods were emphasised to prevent accidental exposure and environmental contamination. This training is vital for maintaining a safe working environment and protecting surrounding communities.
- **Importance of PPE:** The training underscored the necessity of wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) when handling pesticides. CropLife SA demonstrated the correct use of PPE and

explained the health risks associated with neglecting these safety measures. Many participants reported a newfound awareness of safety protocols.

The efforts of CropLife SA in supporting farmworkers cannot be overstated.

Farmworkers are often the neglected segment of the agricultural sector, with much focus traditionally placed on farmers. However, the well-being and education of workers are equally crucial for the overall success of the industry.

Also, farmers frequently lack the budget and time to provide comprehensive training to their workers. Food For Mzansi's Agricultural Worker Days, made possible through the support of CropLife SA, bridge this critical gap. By investing in the education and health of farmworkers, CropLife SA is therefore not only enhancing their quality of life but also contributing to a more sustainable and productive agricultural sector.

## EVENT ATTENDANCE STATISTICS

Food For Mzansi's Agricultural Worker Days reached a total of 1,650 farmworkers through a series of events held in various regions, focusing on the crops typically farmed in each area:

- **Tuesday, 16 April 2024 – Mthatha, Eastern Cape:** In partnership with King Sabata Dalindyebo Local Municipality, 700 workers attended. This region is known for maize, beans, and livestock farming, where proper pesticide use and PPEs are critical for both crop protection and worker safety.
- **Friday, 19 April 2024 – Queenstown, Eastern Cape:** In partnership with Enoch Mgijima Farmers Union, 80 workers attended. Queenstown primarily farms with cattle, sheep, and maize, making it essential to manage pesticides responsibly to safeguard both crops and livestock, with PPEs protecting workers from harmful exposure.
- **Friday, 26 April 2024 – Paarl, Western Cape:** In partnership with Diemersfontein Wine, 100 workers attended. Paarl is renowned for its vineyards and fruit orchards, particularly wine grapes and pears. Responsible pesticide management and proper PPE usage are vital to maintaining the health of both the crops and the workers in these intensive farming operations.

- **Thursday, 9 May 2024 – Ceres, Western Cape:** In partnership with Laastedrif Boerdery, 470 workers attended. Ceres is a key area for apple, pear, and other deciduous fruit farming, where managing pesticide application and ensuring PPE compliance are crucial for high-quality fruit production and worker health.

- **Friday, 10 May 2024 – Robertson, Western Cape:** In partnership with Robertson Landbouvereniging, 150 workers attended. Robertson is well-known for its vineyards, producing both wine and table grapes. Effective pesticide management and consistent PPE use help protect the quality of the grapes and the safety of the farmworkers.

- **Friday, 24 May 2024 – Upington, Northern Cape:** In partnership with GP Viljoen Farms, 150 workers attended. Upington typically farms with grapes, dates, and other fruit crops suitable for the arid climate. Responsible pesticide management and the use of PPEs are essential to protect these crops and ensure the well-being of the workers in this challenging environment.



## IMPACT AND FEEDBACK

Food For Mzansi's Agricultural Worker Days were highly successful, drawing significant participation from farmworkers across the targeted regions. The feedback collected from participants was overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the transformative impact of the training sessions. Here are some key takeaways:

- **Increased awareness:** Participants reported a significant increase in awareness regarding responsible pesticide use and the importance of PPEs. This knowledge is especially crucial in regions like Mthatha, Queenstown, and Upington, where diverse crops such as maize, beans, livestock, grapes, and dates are farmed. Understanding how to manage pesticides responsibly and the importance of PPE is

vital for maintaining both crop quality and worker health.

- **Empowerment:** The training sessions empowered workers with the knowledge and motivation to adopt safer practices. In Paarl, Ceres, and Robertson, areas known for their intensive fruit and vineyard farming, this newfound knowledge is critical. Workers now feel more confident in taking charge of their health and safety, leading to better crop management and personal well-being.
- **Improved safety practices:** The training on pesticide management and PPE usage has led to immediate changes in safety practices. Farmworkers have started implementing what they learned, resulting in a safer working environment. This is particularly evident in regions like Ceres

and Paarl, where the intensive use of pesticides in fruit farming necessitates stringent safety protocols.

- **Community health benefits:** The inclusion of health checks and wellness training provided additional benefits. Farmworkers across all regions, from Mthatha to Upington, now have better access to health information and services. This holistic approach to worker well-being has fostered a healthier and more informed community.
- **Positive testimonials:** The positive feedback from both farmworkers and farmers underscores the success of the events. For instance, Rossouw Cilliers, an award-winning farmer from Laastedrif Boerdery in Ceres, noted, “Hosting the event was an honour. Seeing our workers empowered and educated on such important topics was truly inspiring.” Similarly, Denise Stubbs, CEO of Thokozani Wines in Paarl, remarked, “The Agricultural Worker Days have had a profound impact on our team. The knowledge and skills they gained are invaluable for their safety and well-being.”
- **Life-changing experiences:** Farmworkers expressed how the training sessions have been highly appreciated. Chris Dlamini from Queenstown shared, “This training has opened my eyes to the importance of protecting myself. I feel safer now.”

The Agricultural Worker Days not only increased awareness and empowered farmworkers, but also initiated a cultural shift towards safer and more sustainable farming practices. The events were instrumental in building a stronger, healthier, and more knowledgeable agricultural community.

## CONCLUSION

The collaboration between Food For Mzansi and CropLife South Africa has proven to be immensely beneficial for the farmworker communities in the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, and Northern Cape. The success of the Agricultural Worker Days underscores the importance of continued partnerships in promoting agricultural education, health, and wellness among farmworkers.

We extend our gratitude to CropLife South Africa, Dr Gerhard Verdoorn and Quade Sing Jam for their invaluable contributions. We look forward to future collaborations that will continue to uplift and empower the agricultural workforce.

For detailed accounts of some of the events, please refer to these articles:

- Upington workers taught to know their money, protect their health
- Beyond pills and bills: Farmworkers take charge of wellness.



# WHEN MAY AN INSPECTOR ENTER A commercial pesticide depot or warehouse?

Hiresh Ramanand (Stewardship Specialist)

*“When may an inspector enter my commercial pesticide depot or warehouse”* has been the burning question for many CropLife SA members. So far, in many popular press articles to date, the focus has been placed on the rights of inspectors from state departments, but very few pertaining to the rights of business owners in this context.

It is well-known that state inspectors are authorised to enter a premises, whether a commercial pesticide depot or warehouse, at any reasonable time without having to provide prior notice or a warrant, for the purpose of monitoring and enforcing compliance with the relevant legislation/Act. However, what are the rights of business owners in this regard where no prior notice has been issued?

Commercial pesticide depot and warehouse owners have the right to verify the identity of the individual claiming to be an inspector from a particular state department, regardless of whether the inspection was scheduled or not. This must be done before granting access to the depot or warehouse. The designated inspector must present valid identification (certificate/card of designation). This certificate/card will verify under which Section(s) of the particular legislation/Act the inspector may conduct his/her inspection.



**Figure 1: An example of a valid identification card for an inspector from the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) under the Directorate: Agricultural Inputs Control (DAIC) (Photos: M.P. Malatji).**

CropLife SA members are also advised to be on the lookout for fake certificates/cards, which are not always easy to distinguish. When in doubt, it is always best to phone the relevant department and confirm the inspector's details. Without valid identification, access must not be permitted. Where access is permitted, always remain present during the inspection, answer any

questions honestly, and provide valid records as requested. In addition, note the following:

- An inspector may not charge fees for an inspection, any advice and/or assistance rendered.
- Before an inspector commences with an inspection, he/she must be provided with the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). Maintain a register in this regard.
- Make copies of any records or documents provided to the inspector.
- Request a receipt for any pesticide(s), document(s), machinery, or other article(s) removed/seized by an inspector.
- Do not dodge or circumvent any issue(s) raised by an inspector – this is a short road to disaster.
- Do NOT attempt to bribe an inspector.
- Business owners have the right to appeal the initial findings of an inspection when deemed necessary.

Compliance with various pieces of South African legislation is crucial for businesses to ensure operations continue optimally without costly incidents/disruptions. Commercial pesticide depot and warehouse owners are encouraged to utilise the comprehensive checklists compiled by CropLife SA's stewardship portfolio, which summarises the many pieces of existing legislation impacting the commercial storage of pesticides. CropLife SA members are welcome to adapt the checklists (as applicable) to business operations and conduct self-audits. This is always a great way to understand what's in place, what's not and where immediate attention may be required. A concerted effort to address shortcomings, while setting practical targets, will serve CropLife SA members well in the long-term. Most importantly, this approach will greatly minimise the risk of disputes with state inspectors.

“ Compliance with all applicable South African legislation is not just a legal obligation for CropLife SA members, but the right thing to do as proud citizens of this country. ”

- **Agbiz Congress (5 – 7 June)**

- o Dr. Alan Hardacre, co-founder of Advocacy Strategy and Advocacy Academy, speaks at the 2024 Agbiz Congress at Sun City on bridging the agricultural industry and activism in a session sponsored by CropLife South Africa.
- o Watch the highlights video [here](#).



- **UPL Galela Kakuhle Project (9 – 11 July)**

- o Gerhard Verdoorn (Operations & Stewardship Manager) and Quade Sing Jam (Compliance Specialist) participated in the Galela Kakuhle Project by UPL and provided training to 170 individuals comprising of crop scientists and extension officers from the Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform, as well as Umtiza Farmers Corp technical and branch staff, on the responsible use of pesticides.
- o Watch the highlights video [here](#).



- **Potatoes SA Congress (16 – 17 July)**

- o Rod Bell (CEO) participated in a panel discussion alongside Jonathan Mudzunga (Registrar Act No. 36 of 1947, DALRRD) representing crop protection in a discussion about biosecurity and sustainability.



- **SATI - Annual Table Grape Industry Roadshow (July)**

- o Rod Bell was invited to present at the SATI's annual roadshow held this year in Kakamas, Groblersdal and Paarl. The topic of discussion was phasing out of agricultural remedies that meet the criteria of the GHS classification of CMR 1A or 1B, along with the implications, mitigation strategies and the way forward for the South African table grape industry.



- **SABIO Symposium (19 July)**

- o Dr Gerhard Verdoorn made a presentation at the SABIO Symposium about the potential risk to bees and honey in South Africa if agricultural remedies are not used responsibly.



# New CPD Contact

We are excited to announce that Nadia van Niekerk (Membership and Finance Administrator) is now overseeing the management of the CropLife SA CPD system. Nadia has extensive knowledge of the basic crop protection course platform, which is similar to the CPD

platform, meaning the transition has been swift and seamless. We are also excited to announce that numerous training videos have been created to assist users to navigate the system, in addition to the training manuals.

**For any CPD related queries, please reach out to [cpd@croplife.co.za](mailto:cpd@croplife.co.za) or [nadia@croplife.co.za](mailto:nadia@croplife.co.za).**



## WEBINARS

**The first few CropLife SA training webinars have concluded and were very well attended.**

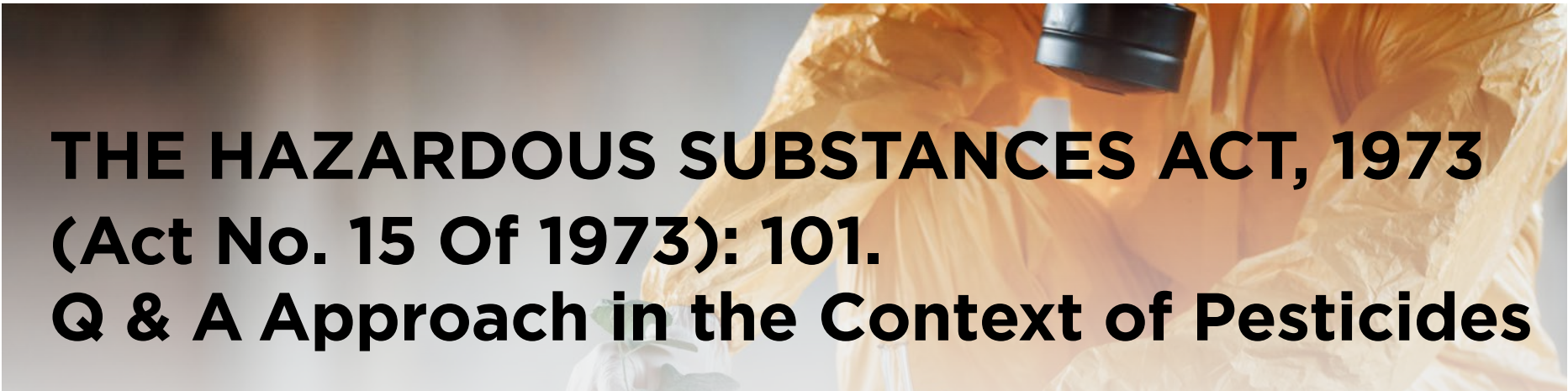
This year we have partnered with various experts and grower groups to provide our members and other stakeholders with insights into their relevant fields of expertise.

So far, we have covered the following:

- Overview of the potato industry with Potatoes SA.
- *Tortricidae* management by Dr. Schalk Schoeman.
- An overview of the grain industry with Grain SA.
- An overview of plant biotechnology by Chantel Arendse.

- Soybean stem rot caused by *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum* by Dr. Lisa Rothmann.
- All you need to know in terms of aerial application compliance by Hires Ramanand.
- Weed management in the grain industry by Dr. Maryke Craven.
- Behaviour of pesticide substances in different matrixes: water, soil and atmosphere by Dr. Gerhard Verdoorn.
- Enhancing Plant Health Surveillance through Advanced Technology and Strategic Partnerships by Roedolf Nieuwenhuis.

If you'd like to register for any of the remaining webinars, please visit <https://croplife.co.za/CropProtection/WebinarSeries>



# THE HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES ACT, 1973 (Act No. 15 Of 1973): 101. Q & A Approach in the Context of Pesticides

## 1. Who requires a Section 4 Group 1 Category 'A' License?

- Companies/branches that import, trade, sell or use **technical grade** aluminum phosphide, antimony potassium/sodium tartrate or zinc phosphide.
- Applicable to manufacturers/formulators who manufacture/formulate pesticide products containing the technical grade material noted above.
- Note: technical grade material is not registered under Act No. 36 of 1947. It is only the formulated end product that is registered under Act No. 36 of 1947.

## 2. Who requires a Section 4 Group 1 Category 'B' License?

- Applicable to any company/branch that is trading/selling formulated pesticide products suitably registered under Act No. 36 of 1947 containing technical grade aluminum phosphide, antimony potassium/sodium tartrate or zinc phosphide.
- Applicable to any company/branch importing, trading or selling formulated pesticide products, with a class 6, division 6.1 (toxic substance) according to the UN number (i.e., UN recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods), that are suitably registered under Act No. 36 of 1947.
- This includes registration holders, distributors, agents/advisers and retailers.
- Annexure C of the application form requires products falling into Group 1 Category B to be listed, which upon inspection, prior to license issuing, will be confirmed.

## 3. Is there a list of Group 1 Category B hazardous substances made available by the Department of Health (DoH)?

- In short there is no such list or annexure/appendix yet.
- CropLife SA members will have to determine, for themselves, whether products being traded with or sold fall into Group 1 Category B.

## 4. How do I determine if my company is trading/selling formulated registered pesticide product(s) with a 6.1 Toxic class according to UN Number?

- Firstly, establish an electronic database for all products being traded/sold and include the UN number with a column where the class according to UN Number can be filled in.
- Where a company is trading/selling a small range of products, then it is best to refer to Section 14 of the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for each product under road transport, where the class will be listed.
- Where a company is trading/selling a large range of products, then it is best to utilise Table C.1 of the South African National Standard (SANS) 10231 for this purpose by searching according to UN Number.
- All products in Class 6, division 6.1 will also contain the skull and cross bones pictogram.

## 5. Who do I submit my Section 4 license application form to in the DoH?

- A list of provincial managers to contact for this purpose was circulated last year by the association and is available on the CropLife SA website via the member portal.

## 6. Is there an application fee when submitting a Section 4 license application?

- Application fees are noted but generally not charged.

## 7. Does a Section 4 license have to be renewed, whether Group 1 Category 'A' or 'B'?

- Yes, and this must be done annually.

## 8. Can licensed suppliers (i.e., registration holder) of Group 1 Category B products trade/sell to distributors, agents/advisers or retailers who are not licensed to trade/sell such products?

- No. Distributors, agents/advisers or retailers must possess a valid Group 1 Category B license.

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9. **Can licensed distributors of Group 1 Category B products trade/sell to agents/advisers or retailers who are not licensed to trade/sell such products?**
- No. Agents/advisers or retailers must possess a valid Group 1 Category B license.
10. **Can licensed agents/advisers or retailers inter-trade with Group 1 Category B products?**
- Yes.
  - **Note:** licensed agents/advisers or retailers cannot trade/sell Group 1 Category B products to agents/advisers or retailers that do not possess a Group 1 Category B license for such products.
11. **Can agents/advisers, retailers or any company selling Group 1 Category B products to end users (i.e. farmers, consumers, PCOs) do so without a valid license?**
- No. Agents/advisers, retailers or any company selling such products to end users must possess a valid Group 1 Category B license to do so.
12. **Do end users (i.e., farmers, consumers, PCOs) require a Section 4 Group 1 Category B license to purchase registered Group 1 Category B formulated pesticide products?**
- End users do not require a Section 4 Group 1 Category B license to purchase Group 1 Category B products, but are required to store such products according to the requirements of Act No. 15 of 1973 (i.e., double locking).
13. **What are the key requirements for DoH inspectors prior to issuing a Section 4 Group 1 Category 'A' or 'B' license?**
- **Storage:** DoH inspectors will confirm whether the storage facility is fit for purpose and most importantly, whether the technical grade material or registered formulated products, as listed on 'Annexure C' of the submitted application form, is/are being stored behind lock and key (i.e., double locking). Where stock has not yet arrived by the time of inspection, provision must still be made.
  - Provision/maintenance of a **"Poison Register"**: necessary to confirm **legitimate sales**.
  - **Note:** 'Annexure B' of the Section 4 license application form provides an evaluation tool to be utilised by inspectors upon inspections.
14. **In terms of storage, is a separate facility from the main storage facility required for Group 1 Category B products?**
- Such products can be stored in a separate, ventilated, lockable room in the building where a separate facility from the main building is not required.
  - An area of the depot/warehouse where such pesticides are stored can be separated with a sealed off dry wall that has a lockable door.
  - Another option is to erect a lockable mesh cage or similar structure around the area where such products are kept.
  - Where a facility is bonded as Group 1 Category B with a "ring bell" function to signal to an authorised employee to open the door before anyone enters or leaves the facility, this will also constitute having such products stored under lock and key.
  - Whichever option is decided on will depend on business models and budget, but the key point here is that whatever option may be decided upon, all Group 1 Category B products must be kept behind lock and key.
15. **As a licensed manufacturer/formulator importing, using, trading/selling Group 1 Category 'A' technical grade material, what do I record in my poison register?**
- Manufacturers/formulators who possess a Group 1 Category A license must record the following:
    - Stock records: name & quantity of such hazardous substances; date of importation/acquisition & name of supplier.  
Name(s) of the responsible person (i.e., Business Owner/Branch Manager) and their valid Section 4 license number to use and/or trade/sell such substances, as well as the date, name and quantity of the technical grade material supplied on the invoice.
    - Signed supply and sales records (i.e., invoices) for trading partner(s)/client(s) must be kept for three years should there be an incident (i.e., crime committed using the technical grade material) that warrants an investigation.
    - Records of acquisitions and sales are to be balanced at the end of April and September each year.

**16. As a licensed company/business importing and/or trading/selling Group 1 Category 'B' formulated registered pesticide products, what must be recorded in the poison register?**

- Registration holders, distributors, agents/advisers and retailers who possess a Group 1 Category B license must record the following:
  - Stock records: name & quantity of all Group 1 Category B products; date of importation/acquisition & name of supplier.
  - Name(s) of the responsible person (i.e., Business Owner/Branch Manager) and their valid Section 4 license number to trade with such products where the products are supplied to a trading/selling company/branch.
  - Finally, for all sales, which includes sales to end users (i.e., farmers) record on the invoice the date, trade name of product(s), active ingredient(s), quantity, full names of the purchaser/recipient and purpose for which the product(s) is purchased/received.
  - Signed supply and sales records (i.e., invoices) for trading partner(s)/client(s) must be kept for three years should there be an incident (i.e., crime committed using the product) that warrants an investigation.
  - Records of acquisitions and sales are to be balanced at the end of April and September each year.

**17. Do I need to keep an electronic or written poison register?**

- When looking at 'Annexure B' of the application form, written or electronic records will be acceptable.
- However, there are inspectors in certain provinces which may demand that a written register be maintained.
- It is therefore crucial to seek clarity on this from the relevant provincial DoH manager through email or a phone call.
- Keep all communications in this regard safely filed to serve as proof if ever required.
- Consult the list of provincial DoH managers made available by the association to members for contact details.

**18. If there are delays with the issuing of my Section 4 Group 1 Category B license by the DoH, do I stop trading/selling?**

- No, provided a paper trail (for example, email communications with provincial managers, letters, enquiry receipts, etc.) is maintained to show that effort has been and continues to be made by following up on delays.
- Inspectors will not seize any products or seal off a commercial storage facility where such a paper trail can be presented in the absence of a valid license.
- Maintaining records of all such sales, as per the requirements of a poison register, cannot be overstated.

**19. Where there are issues with DoH inspectors not acting in good faith, what do I do?**

- Inspectors not acting in good faith must be reported to their provincial DoH manager.
- The issues must be outlined and clarity on the way forward must be sought.
- Keep all communication records safely filed and inform the CropLife SA stewardship portfolio of such behaviour.

**20. What has CropLife SA's stewardship portfolio done to ensure members are able to comply with the requirements of Act No. 15 of 1973?**

- An in-depth training webinar which took place in 2023 where the recorded version is available to members on the CropLife SA website.
- A summarised "Quick Guide" document based on the in-depth webinar was circulated to all stewardship forum participants for further dissemination within their respective companies.
- The key requirements and challenges pertaining to this Act were work-shopped during the 2<sup>nd</sup> stewardship forum in a practical manner based on member queries.
- Queries and requests to date from CropLife SA members in relation to the requirements of this Act have been timeously dealt with by the stewardship portfolio where guidance, advice and assistance continues to be provided.



# Container Management from a Recycler's Perspective

Chrisleen Naidoo (Silvix Forestry)

**When I was initially approached by CropLife SA to become a certified recycler, I could honestly think of nothing worse!**

Trying to convince a farmer/grower to triple rinse their empty pesticide drums when they already had their own struggles to survive. "Rinsing" meant water, which meant staff, which meant NO, let's not even talk about the "triple" part. But living and working in Northern KwaZulu-Natal, I could not ignore the fact that these empty drums, in all shapes and sizes where not being monitored, and the last straw was seeing people lining up at water tankers with their used pesticide drums waiting for drinking water. It made me think about CropLife SA and their pictograms, and that is where it began.

It sparked fury and confusion and that was all I needed to jump onboard and start my "reign of terror" on the correct and lawful way to dispose of these empty pesticide drums. The road to educate individuals on the responsible way of container disposal is a long one, but it's a trip worth taking if it leads us to a healthier and cleaner country.

I am always nervous when I'm asked for my opinion, and the CropLife SA stewardship portfolio asks for this



quite often, but having said that, I have never felt more comfortable with a group of individuals who all want the same thing. The recycling initiative is taken so seriously, and that makes us very proud to be a part of it.

The swiftness of introducing the new polypropylene 1T bags, to assist CropLife SA's recycling warriors was one of the more exciting things to report on. Seeing CropLife SA certified recyclers travel from around the country to collect these bags made me feel that we already started making a difference and have people out there who are like-minded about our future.

Silvix Forestry is indeed a proud member of CropLife SA, and we are here for the long haul. To all the CropLife SA certified recyclers around the country, remember we are doing this now for a better future.

Keep your heads up and always remember you have already made a difference by just saying 'yes' to the programme!

## Container Management WhatsApp Videos

Please note that the stewardship portfolio has made a few videos available on YouTube in an appeal to farmers to triple rinse and responsibly dispose of empty plastic pesticide containers through the CropLife SA container management system. The videos are available in English, Zulu, Afrikaans and Xhosa and can be accessed and downloaded [here](#).

**Please feel free to use and distribute these as needed.**





# In case you missed it

## CropLife SA CPD – Resolution taken at AGM 2024

Kindly find herewith [important communication](#) pertaining to the resolution taken at the 2024 Annual General Meeting regarding participation in the CropLife SA Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme. Please feel free to reach out to [cpd@croplife.co.za](mailto:cpd@croplife.co.za) if you have any questions in this regard.

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## Advertising Governance Programme

CropLife SA has managed the Advertising Governance Programme for more than a decade and have had great success with our members elevating advertising standards. With the August 2023 regulations for agricultural remedies coming into effect last year, the requirements for printed, broadcast and electronic advertising became slightly more demanding. Whereas advertisements only had to display the hazard classification in the past, the new regulations require the hazard signal words plus the hazard statements to be reflected in all advertisements.

The CropLife SA stewardship portfolio invites all our members to submit advertisements to anyone of the three team members, namely Gerhard at [gerhard@croplife.co.za](mailto:gerhard@croplife.co.za), Hires at [hires@croplife.co.za](mailto:hires@croplife.co.za) or Quade at [quade@croplife.co.za](mailto:quade@croplife.co.za) for auditing. It is a membership service offered free of charge to all members and at this stage we believe it is not utilised to its full potential. All we need is a PDF copy of the advertisement and a copy of the pesticide(s) GHS label(s) if such labels are not yet displayed on Agri-Intel.

Hoping to see those advertisements coming in hard and fast!

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## GHS information

According to regulation 17(5) of the “Regulations relating to agricultural remedies” of 25 August 2023: “All labels shall be accompanied by information defining what the hazard statement, GHS pictograms and signal words on the label mean, and the safety behaviour required to reduce exposure risks. These can be in the form of a removable leaflet for containers or part of QR codes (Quick Response Code)”.

To assist members in addressing this requirement, the CropLife SA team composed an information page on our website explaining how the GHS works, along with information on the hazard statements, pictograms and signal words, as stipulated in the regulations.

- This webpage can be accessed here: <https://croplife.co.za/CropProtection/GHS>
- This webpage is linked to a [QR code](#) which is also distributed with this communication for members to use on their agricultural remedy labels and/or packaging.
- This information is also included on a [brochure](#) that can be downloaded from the website for easy distribution to distributors/agents/farmers.
- This webpage also contains a short [presentation](#) regarding the GHS and how agricultural remedy labels have changed.

If you have any comments or queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.





# CropLife in the Media

## What's new in the regulations on agricultural remedies?

*SA Grain – June Edition*

The crop protection industry is governed by Act No. 36 of 1947, along with the fertiliser, farm feeds and stock remedy industries. Although some may think that this act is outdated because it was created in 1947, it is continuously kept up to date with new regulations in support of the act. The latest of these are the new Regulations Relating to Agricultural Remedies published in the Government Gazette on 25 August 2023.

These regulations brought about a number of changes and additional requirements, many of which are aimed at ensuring that anyone who works with these potentially hazardous products can do so in a manner that keeps themselves and the environment safe. One such amendment is the alignment of the regulations to the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS). According to GHS, the labels and safety data sheets of agricultural remedies need to follow a standardised approach in classifying and communicating the hazards of the chemical. Read the article [here](#).



## Exploring semiochemical-based strategies in pest management

*SA Grain – June Edition*

According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations, integrated pest management (IPM) is the careful consideration of all available pest control techniques and subsequent integration of appropriate measures that discourage pest populations.



*Photo: counterpart-sermiochemicals.com*

It combines biological, chemical, physical and crop-specific management strategies and practices to grow healthy crops, reducing the use and dependence on chemical pesticides. Semiochemicals are one such tool that can be used as part of an integrated approach to manage pest species, specifically insect pests. Read the article [here](#).



# CropLife in the Media

## Risk of high South African MRLs on grain exports

*SA Grain – July Edition*

South Africa is a significant role-player in international grain production. Annually millions of tons of maize, wheat and other grains are produced, helping to ensure local food security and supporting the economy via exports and international trade. However, pesticide maximum residue limits (MRLs) are currently one of the most challenging and fastest growing trade policy issues impacting global food production and trade.

The responsible use of pesticides in grain production is crucial to control a wide variety of insects, weeds and other pests and diseases. A crop that has been treated with a pesticide may contain small trace amounts of pesticide chemicals which are called residues. Residues break down over time, but some may remain in grain and other food products by the time it reaches a consumer's plate. Regulatory authorities in most countries have therefore established MRLs and import tolerances (ITs) to regulate pesticide residues in food products to ensure that it is safe. MRLs and ITs are important trade standards which foster international food trade.

Although MRLs and ITs are not safety standards, consumer safety is assessed when MRLs are set. Read the article [here](#).

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## Phasing out of potentially harmful agricultural remedies comes into effect

*SA Grain – July Edition*

The Registrar of Act No. 36 of 1947's decision in 2022 to phase out active ingredients and formulations that may potentially cause cancer, genetic mutation and damages to fertility came into effect recently.

On 14 April 2022 the Registrar announced his intent to phase out active ingredients and formulations that meet the criteria of carcinogenicity, mutagenicity, and reproductive toxicity (CMR) categories 1A or 1B for the Globally Harmonised System (GHS) of classification and labelling. According to the new regulations, products that meet these criteria will not have their registrations renewed as from June 2024.

CMR category 1A refers to active ingredients and/or co-formulants that meet the criteria of being a known human carcinogen, mutagen or reproductive toxin, largely based on human evidence. Category 1B refers to a presumed human carcinogen, mutagen or reproductive toxin, largely based on animal studies.

The process involves discontinuing the registration and sale of products containing these hazardous substances. The Registrar has provided a maximum phase-out period of one year for stock of these remedies to be depleted from warehouses and on farms. These remedies will no longer be registered and cannot be used after 1 June 2025. Read the article [here](#).



# CONTACT

**If you have any queries, would like to become a member,  
or if you have general feedback, we would love to hear from you.  
Please contact any member of our team:**

CropLife SA Office

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