



Natural Resources Assessment NEWS

Washington State Department of Agriculture ♦ Natural Resources Assessment Section Newsletter

WSDA & Ecology release 2007 surface water monitoring data

A summary of the 2007 monitoring results of Washington state's ongoing surface water monitoring program has been released by the Washington State Departments of Agriculture (WSDA) and Ecology.

In 2007, 64 currently registered pesticide, historical-use pesticide and/or degradate compounds were detected. The majority of the pesticide detections was low and close to analytical detection limits. Herbicides were the most commonly detected class of pesticides. However, regional differences in pest pressures impacted the percentages of pesticide classes detected in each basin.



In the urban basin, dichlobenil (Casoron[®]) was the most frequently detected pesticide. Tebuthiuron, atrazine and DDE (a degradate of DDT) were the most commonly detected compounds in the agricultural basins – Skagit, Lower Yakima and Wenatchee/Entiat respectively.

Azinphos-methyl, chlorpyrifos, diazinon, DDT, DDE and endosulfan exceeded either a state water quality standard or recommended water quality criteria at least once in 2007.

Year 2007 is the first in a three-year study cycle to investigate pesticides in the Wenatchee and Entiat watersheds, second in a three-year cycle in the Skagit-Samish watershed and the fifth in a six-year cycle in the Cedar-Sammamish and Lower Yakima watersheds.

The 2007 fact sheet and the complete report can be found on the WSDA and Ecology Web sites at agr.wa.gov/PestFert/natresources/SWM/default.htm and ecy.wa.gov/programs/eap/toxics/pesticides.htm ♦

Climate change — impacts & opportunities for farmers

As Washington experiences longer summers, higher temperatures, reduced snow pack, and more extreme weather events, the state's farmers and ranchers are wondering what the impact will be to their bottom line. As some of the most climate-dependent business owners in the state, farmers may have the most to lose.

A group of Washington's most innovative agriculture producers are joining university researchers, natural resource conservationists and advocates for agriculture to take an in-depth look at the risks presented by global climate change, as well as the potential opportunities.

The Agricultural Working Group on Climate Change Mitigation, part of the state's effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, met for the first time this week in Moses Lake. Over the next four months, the panel will explore how climate change will impact growing conditions, yields, commodity prices, input costs and other factors.

The panel will also look at the positive and potentially profitable role agriculture can

Continued on page 2.



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CONTACTS

Kirk V. Cook, LG, LHG
Section Manager/
Hydrogeologist
(360) 902-1936
kcCook@agr.wa.gov

Deborah Bahs
Crop & Pesticide Use
Specialist
(360) 902-2067
dbahs@agr.wa.gov

Rod Baker
Crop Mapping and
Waste Pesticide Disposal
(360) 902-2046
rbaker@agr.wa.gov

Perry Beale
Crop Mapping Coordinator
(360) 902-2065
pbeale@agr.wa.gov

Jim Cowles, Ph.D.
WSDA Toxicologist
(360) 902-2066
jcowles@agr.wa.gov

Laurie Crose
Administrative Assistant
(360) 725-5768
lcrose@agr.wa.gov

Joe Hoffman
Waste Pesticide Disposal
(360) 902-2048
jhoffman@agr.wa.gov

Ed Thompson
Database Developer
(360) 902-2064
ethompson@agr.wa.gov

COMMENTS?

We welcome your input.
Please e-mail your
comments and questions to
nras@agr.wa.gov

Continued from page 1.

play in sequestering carbon from the atmosphere in plants, thereby reducing the impact of emissions from other sources. Under a proposed regional "cap and trade" system, farmers could generate additional income by selling carbon emission reduction credits to power plants and others required to reduce carbon emissions.

"Climate change does present some opportunities for our growers," said Kirk Cook, WSDA hydrogeologist, a co-lead of the panel. "Our producers are already implementing innovative solutions, from generating electricity from animal waste to moving to lower impact farming practices. As a regional or national trading system comes on line, we want our producers to be positioned to generate revenue from these practices and others that can reduce the impact of pollution."

Additional information about the Agricultural Working Group, as well as presentations, meeting schedules and names of the panelists, is available under "Forestry and Agriculture" at ecy.wa.gov/climatechange ♦

NRAS updates Web site

A renamed and completely redesigned web site was launched by the WSDA Natural Resources Assessment Section (NRAS). Reorganized to reflect the consolidation of the Endangered Species Protection, Water Quality Protection and Waste Pesticide programs into NRAS, the new web site contains information on WSDA resource protection activities as well as details about the expanded duties of NRAS.



The web site can be viewed at agr.wa.gov/PestFert/natresources/default.htm

"The Internet is an integral part of the NRAS plan to communicate timely information about our activities and accomplishments to pesticide users, stakeholders, and the general public. The revised web site makes it easy for anyone interested in NRAS activities to find information and answers to questions in a clear and user-friendly manner," said section manager, Kirk Cook. "In addition its extensive online information, it also serves as a showcase for NRAS data." ♦

States evaluate pesticides for potential effects on water resources

EPA is requiring states to assess the environmental data for 57 pesticides. The 57 pesticides were identified in the 2005 State-FIFRA Issues Research and Evaluation Group (SFIREF) survey as active ingredients recognized nationally as having the potential to occur in ground or surface water at concentrations approaching or exceeding a human health or ecological reference point. EPA also requires any pesticide included a state's in the Clean Water Act §303(d) list be added to that state's assessment.

To date, WSDA has evaluated 15 pesticides used in Washington state. Endosulfan, presently on Washington's CWA §303(d) list, was the only active ingredient determined to be likely to approach or exceed a human health or ecological reference point in localized areas of Washington state.

WSDA is reviewing the environmental data for the 57 pesticides as part of the current EPA-WSDA Cooperative Work Agreement and plans to review 15 pesticides each year until the assessments are completed. ♦

Resource Realities:



Producing a fast food meal — hamburger, French fries and a soft drink — uses 1,500 gallons of water. This figure includes the water needed to raise potatoes for the fries and produce grain for the bun as well as the grain needed to feed the cattle, and the water used to make the soda. ♦

Awareness

Assessment

Action