

TRAIN-THE-TRAINER PROGRAM

How the WSDA helps growers

Below: Dean Hata, E.W. Brandt & Sons, Inc. and Jess Carkner, Sakuma Brothers Farm, conducting a pesticide safety training using role-play as the training method.



After several Worker Protection Standard inspections revealed that fieldworkers were often not provided adequate pesticide safety training, in 2003 the state Department of Agriculture developed and introduced the **Train-the-Trainer (T-t-T) Program**. WSDA also discovered that the pesticide safety training received by pesticide handlers often failed to meet Worker Protection Standards (WPS) training requirements. Employers were out of compliance for several reasons that included a lack of awareness of WPS requirements, lack of written materials available and language barriers.

Training benefits & materials

The majority of people who have attended the department's T-t-T workshops are orchard owners, supervisors, or managers who now have a better understanding of the WPS-training requirements for fieldworkers and pesticide handlers. In the daylong

workshop, most WPS-required training points get discussed in detail so that trainers become familiar with each one. Participants learn different training methods and, as a result, become more efficient in hosting their own training sessions.

In addition, these soon-to-be trainers become steeped in employer responsibilities to protect fieldworkers and pesticide handlers.

During a training session, participants receive the T-t-T Manual compiled by WSDA, a WPS How to Comply booklet by the EPA, and other training guides for pesticide handlers and fieldworkers. These resources help participants become effective trainers and come under compliance with all WPS requirements. WSDA also uses the T-t-T programs to notify attendees about important new developments. At the 2004 courses, a representative from the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) was present

to explain the new cholinesterase-monitoring rule.

At the end of each T-t-T session, most participants feel comfortable and capable of conducting their own training sessions effectively.

Training Methods

Research indicates that learner retention is greatly enhanced by using a combination of interactive training methods. T-t-T participants learn through interactive training methods, such as case study and group discussions, role-playing, hands-on activities, and television games, such as Wheel of Fortune or Jeopardy. By using a variety of methods, the trainer increases his or her chances of breaking through learning barriers. That's especially true among adults of different culture, non-native English speakers, and participants with varying literacy levels.

In photo, left, one of the trainers pretends to be drinking from a bottle of "soda" that he found after returning from a pesticide application. The other trainer pretends to be the co-worker who arrives too late to explain that the bottle contains a liquid pesticide and not soda. Consequently, a few minutes later, the person who mistakenly drank the pesticide started to feel sick.

After acting out the scenario, the trainers involve the audience by asking a series of questions such as: What was done wrong? What could have been done to avoid the problem?

Training environment

Among many other things, participants learn that the physical environment such as room temperature, space, noise, and other basic needs (drinking water, sitting and restrooms) for a training session can have an effect on individuals' comprehension and skill acquisition. An uncomfortable setting or inadequate facility may adversely affect skill acquisition.

Participant Comments

Since 2003, 226 people who work mainly in the tree fruit industry statewide have attended the department's TtT program at least once. Most of them walk away

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satisfied customers and confident trainers to be. Just consider some of their comments:

"It was a great training workshop, interactive, informative, and fun. I learned many new things."

Jorge Morado, Sakuma Brothers Farm, Burlington, WA

"The industry benefits by having well prepared trainers that can conduct effective and practical training sessions. Although I considered myself a trainer with experience, during the WSDA TtT I learned different training methods I had not used before."

Mario Molina, Zirkle Fruit Co., Pasco, WA.

"After attending two different T-t-T sessions, as a foreman, I feel very confident because I learned the WPS training

requirements. I learned how to effectively deliver training sessions. In addition, I learned some of the responsibilities that employers have in order to protect their fieldworkers and pesticide handlers according to WPS."

Neftali Pereira, Washington Fruit & Produce, Quincy, WA.

Training locations & attendance

Since the programs began in 2003, nine Train-the-Trainer workshops have been conducted. To make training available to more people, sessions have been offered at locations statewide. This year's training events took place in Moses Lake, Pasco, Toppenish, and Omak, and drew 100 trainers. During the 2005 training session, WSDA plans to conduct at least four in the following tentative locations: Othello, Prosser, Yakima, and Wenatchee.



For information about this training program, contact Ofelio Borges, (509) 225-2625, oborges@agr.wa.gov or Flor Tovar, (509) 662-0590, ftovar@agr.wa.gov.

Now available: Spanish turf and ornamental weed manual, exams

Washington State University (WSU) and WSDA have responded to the increasing numbers of Hispanic landscape applicators by implementing a new study manual and corresponding exams. The vast majority of individuals who will benefit from the new materials work for commercial landscape companies.

Spanish manuals and exams enhance the learning experience of native Spanish speakers and make them more comfortable in the exam-taking process. The materials do not replace the need for a tester to learn and read English. The questions appear in Spanish, and the labels are presented in English. This mirrors the way labels are found in the marketplace. This may change in the future if registered labels become readily available in Spanish.

Unlike its English counterpart, which consists of two manuals, the Spanish manual combines the study material for the Laws & Safety and Turf & Ornamental Weed Control exams. The Spanish manual (reference number MISC 0492S) may be purchased from the WSU Bulletin Office at 1-800-723-1763 or on-line at pep.wsu.edu/Education/StudyMaterials/studymaterials.htm.

In winter 2005, WSU plans to hold a pre-license course in Spanish Turf and Ornamental Weed/Laws and Safety in Western Washington. Information on this course will be in WSU's annual course bulletin, published in October,

and on the Pesticide Education program's web site at pep.wsu.edu/Education/educ.html.

With these additions, Washington becomes one of the only states in the country to offer Spanish exams for both growers and landscape applicators. For further information, contact Pesticide Licensing toll-free at 1-877-301-4555.

Spanish-speaking trainers needed

There has been an explosion in the number of certified landscape applicators whose first language is Spanish. As a result, Washington State University has a growing need for Spanish speaking trainers with expertise in turf and ornamental pest management. Interested individuals should contact Becky Hines, WSU Pesticide Education Specialist, at (253) 445-4595 or hinesre@puyallup.wsu.edu.

