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BOARD OF PESTICIDES CONTROL

July 8, 2010

Northeastland Hotel, Ballroom
436 Main Street, Presque Isle

**PUBLIC INFORMATION GATHERING MEETING
ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE NOTIFICATION REGISTRY
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS**

6:00 PM

- Present: Jemison and Qualey
- Staff Director Henry Jennings introduced the purpose of the meeting and provided some background and history about the development of the comprehensive registry.

First to speak was Tim Hobbs from the Maine Potato Board. Hobbs spoke about the recent advertisement promoting the comprehensive registry. Based on the 1,600 people signing up for the registry, he calculated that only 1/3 of 1% of the population within the circulation area of newspaper ads signed up for the registry. Hobbs observed that LD 1547 directed the Board to develop a comprehensive registry, and as such, it should cover all outdoor pesticide applications, including those made by homeowners. He acknowledged that a proposal to include homeowners would require additional staff and funding for the Board, but that's what the statute calls for. He said if the registry doesn't cover everything, then the public health basis for the registry doesn't hold. Hobbs recounted a recent example of homeowner misuse of consumer products. He believed there is not any definitive science that will assist the Board in specifying distances. The Potato Board doesn't support requiring signs. They would need to see more specifics on the content and positioning of signs to offer more concrete comments. The Potato Board supports development of an automated registry system to the extent that it would make the research process easier for applicators.

Don Flannery, also from the Maine Potato Board, echoed Hobbs' comments about the comprehensive nature of the registry. Flannery believed the Board should put forward a truly comprehensive registry, even if it carried a steep fiscal note. If it's really about public health, then make it comprehensive.

Brandon Roope, a potato grower, stated he was offended by the idea of limiting the registry to licensed applicators, since they are the ones that are trained. Roope has only had one person ask him what he was spraying in 40 years of farming. He believes the laws in place now are working fine.

Galen Flewelling, a potato farmer from Easton, noted that growers have made a lot of changes over the last 15 years that reduce pesticide drift. They've dramatically reduced the operating pressure and implemented other technological improvements. Profit margins are so tight that growers have to use

the lowest effective rate and the least amount of pesticides, because they cost so much. The new sprayers are also much faster and growers can cover a lot more ground in a shorter amount of time, allowing them to spray in better weather conditions. No one has ever asked Flewelling for notification. He doesn't support a requirement for posting signs, and said that growers would put up "No Trespassing" signs also. Flewelling sees no reason to change the current law since it's working well.

Bruce Roope is Brandon's brother and partner. He spoke of the importance of the legislative tour and participating in the legislative process. Bruce pointed out that organic applicators also use pesticides, and he expressed the view that it is the untrained applicators that are most likely to misapply pesticides. A comprehensive registry might be what is needed to shift the focus to the untrained applicator.

Romey Haines is a member of the Maine Farm Bureau, NRCM and a variety of other organizations. Haines doesn't think it's helpful for organic growers to be feuding with conventional growers. He spoke of a recent report linking organophosphate exposure with ADHD. Children in urban areas had four times the exposure level as children in rural areas. Haines doesn't believe that additional notification provisions are necessary in rural Maine, and the BPC efforts should be focused on urban areas. He spoke about the challenges of marketing organic products, like Maine's Own Organic Milk, which he is trying to market.

Dave Bell of the Wild Blueberry Commission suggested that we may already have all the information we need in the existing registries. Chapter 51 contains a 500-foot notification requirement; Chapter 28 contains both a 500-foot requirement and the 250-foot one for the urban registry. Bell argued against any system that has different distances for urban landscapes than it does for rural landscapes. Distances need to be consistent by equipment type, because equipment has more influence on the potential for an application to impact neighbors.