

BANGOR DAILY NEWS EDITORIAL

Getting the Bugs Out

6/3/10

A new registration system will, for the first time, allow nearby residents easily to ask for notification of when agricultural pesticides will be sprayed in the area. This is a positive step toward better public notification, which, unlike many government initiatives, requires follow-up to see whether the system is working.

Residents who want to be notified if agricultural pesticides will be applied by planes, helicopters or air blast sprayers must put their name on a registry maintained by the Maine Board of Pesticides Control. Residents must live within a quarter-mile of land where the pesticides are applied (within 500 feet for fruit trees or Christmas trees). They can register until June 15 to be notified of spraying this year.

To register or get more information, go to www.thinkfirstspraylast.org or call 287-2731. You must re-register each year, an unnecessary step the board and Legislature should consider removing.

Before spraying, landowners or managers must get a copy of the registry to see whom they must notify. Notification can be by phone, e-mail, mail or in person and must be done between one and seven days before spraying.

The board has also kept a registry for nonagricultural spraying, mostly for lawn care. To be included in this registry, you must pay \$20.

The board, at the direction of the Legislature, is looking for ways to combine the two lists, which makes sense, although requiring lawn care personnel to notify people in a quarter-mile radius is unnecessary.

The Legislature wisely asked the board to find out if the public knows about the agricultural registry. Since the board began advertising its existence recently, the number of people on the list has doubled to 1,000. Beyond this, the board plans to do a survey to find out if people know that the registry exists and that they can be included if they qualify.

Some landowners and pesticide applicators worry that drawing attention to the registry will increase concerns about the chemicals, which have been used for decades. This is a valid concern, but it does not outweigh their neighbors' rights to be notified of when pesticides will be sprayed so they can take precautions.

The board is also looking for ways to simplify the registry, perhaps by creating an Internet system that maps overlaying spray and notification areas from which e-mails could be sent out automatically.

Beginning the registry is a good first step. Ensuring it is working as intended — and changing it if it is not — will help fulfill its intent.

May 28

Pesticide-spray alerts offered

Under a new law, those who live near farms or orchards can sign up to be notified of applications.

By [John Richardson](mailto:John.Richardson@mainetoday.com)
Staff Writer

Stuart Hill raises organic vegetables and fruit at his home in Cumberland.

He also lives so close to an apple orchard that the pesticides sprayed on those trees can blow onto his crops or into the windows of his house, he said.

Now, thanks to a new state law, Hill gets a warning from the orchard operator a day before the trees get sprayed.

"I'll close up the side of the greenhouse that faces the orchard" and make sure the windows are shut in his kids' bedrooms, he said.

Maine's agricultural pesticide notification law, considered the only one of its kind in the country, took effect this spring. Any resident within a quarter-mile of a farm or within 500 feet of a fruit tree or Christmas tree orchard can sign up to be notified before any mechanical pesticide applications, such as by airplanes or air-blast sprayers.

Mainers who want to know about pesticide spraying near their homes have until June 15 to sign up for notifications this year.

After that, names will be added to next year's list.

About 525 Mainers signed up in time to get notifications this spring, and about 250 more have signed up for notifications starting in July, said Paul Schlein, spokesman for the Maine Board of Pesticide Control. Some people on the registry live in rural farm areas, while others are in the suburbs, Schlein said.

Hill signed up last year.

He lives about 400 feet from Orchard Hill Farm, and for years he had concerns about pesticide spraying by the apple orchard's former owner.

He didn't like the spray drifting onto his vegetables, but his bigger concern was the health effects it might have on his children, Hill said.

"A lot of times the orchards spray at night. If there is a slight breeze, then that fungicide or whatever they are spraying is coming right into our windows," he said.

Hill said the orchard's current owners have cut back on pesticide use and have almost always called or sent e-mails on the evenings before they spray.

The law allows for emergency spraying without notification under certain conditions.

"They've reached out to the community," Hill said.

The owners of Orchard Hill Farm could not be reached Thursday.

Christy Hemenway of Bath put her name on the free registry in hopes of protecting her beehives. She owns Gold Star Honeybees and tries to raise healthy, pesticide-free bees at her home and for clients around the state.

"I mostly wanted to see whether the system works well so I can encourage other folks to sign up," she said.

She hasn't received any warnings, however, and isn't likely to get any under the current rules.

The closest commercial neighbor that's likely to spray pesticides on a large scale is a golf course, which isn't covered by the law.

And, while the golf course is well within foraging range for her bees, it's more than a quarter-mile from her home.

The golf course also is too far away for Hemenway to take advantage of other state notification rules.

"There probably is a bit of a flaw in that it doesn't reach farther," Hemenway said of the new law.

"Two miles would be minimal for bees. They don't know about property lines."

But, she said, the law "is a step in the right direction."

The law created an initial burden for some farmers and orchard owners because they had to send notices to neighbors about the new registry.

"Some of the farmers had a huge list of people they had to notify," said Renae Moran, secretary of the Maine State Pomological Society and a fruit tree specialist for the University of Maine.

The actual spraying notifications appear to be less of a problem, she said.

"For most farmers, there are one or two people who want to be notified," Moran said.

Apple growers say, however, that they can't always plan far enough ahead to give notice, because of changes in the weather or sudden pest outbreaks.

"When you have damage that's going to affect you economically, then you deal with that pest. You need to be able to do that right away," said Ellen McAdam, whose family operates McDougal Orchards in Springvale.

The law allows for same-day notification in such cases.

"It is a good thing for neighbors to know that you're spraying and what you're spraying. It's just too bad it's come to the point there's legislation," she said.

"You expect everyone to talk to everyone, and that, in a lot of times, doesn't happen."

None of McDougal Orchards' neighbors signed up for notifications this spring, McAdam said. Anyone who signs up now will be posted on the list in July.

Staff Writer John Richardson can be contacted at 791-6324 or at:

jrichardson@pressherald.com

Find this article at:

http://www.pressherald.com/news/pesticide-spray-alerts-offered_2010-05-28.html

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.



DON'T Pay For White Teeth
Augusta Mom discovers one simple trick to turn yellow teeth white from home for under \$5.



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Thursday, June 10, 2010 in Lewiston, Maine

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FRANKLIN

Deadline for pesticide spraying notification is Tuesday

Jun 10, 2010 12:00 am

AUGUSTA – Mainers who want to be notified about agricultural pesticide spraying near their homes this season have until June 15 to sign up for the Maine Pesticide Notification Registry.

Any resident of Maine with property within a quarter mile (500 feet for fruit trees or Christmas trees) of land where agricultural pesticides are applied by airplanes, helicopters, mist blowers, or air-blast sprayers can be notified in advance.

The registry, thought to be the only one of this type in the United States, is a simple and free way for Mainers to be notified about agricultural pesticide spraying near their homes.

The Maine State Legislature passed a law in 2009 that created the registry and gave the Maine Board of Pesticides Control the responsibility for its development, distribution and maintenance.

To sign up on the registry, or for more information, go to www.thinkfirstspraylast.org. To request a paper sign-up form, call the Maine Board of Pesticides Control at 207-287-2731. After June 15, names will be held for the 2011 registry.

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OXFORD HILLS

Deadline for pesticide spraying registry Tuesday

By Leslie H. Dixon, Staff Writer
Jun 12, 2010 12:00 am

AUGUSTA — Residents who want to be notified of pesticide spraying near their homes must sign up on the Maine Board of Pesticides Control's website by Tuesday.

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The state is distributing fliers like this one about the pesticide spraying registry. Residents who want to be notified of aerial spraying near their homes must register by June 15 on the Maine Board of Pesticides Control's website.

— Leslie H. Dixon/Sun Journal
Buy a Print

<http://www.maine.gov/agriculture/pesticides/public/registry.htm>

While most people will never be affected by the aerial spraying, about 1,470 had registered by Friday, according to Henry Jennings, director of the Maine Board of Pesticides Control.

The registry was set up last fall with a sign-up deadline of March 15, Jennings said. However, since only 525 had done so by then, legislators spent \$25,000 to spread the word about the do-not-spray list and extending the deadline to June 15.

Once a person is on the registry, they can expect to receive a one-day notice of applicable pesticide applications made within 1,320 feet (500 feet for fruit trees and Christmas trees) from their property. Those who sign up by June 15 will not be notified until after July 1.

Those who do not have Internet access may request a printed form from the board and return it by mail.

Next year, new registrants must sign up by March 15.

ldixon@sunjournal.com

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Thursday, June 10, 2010 in Lewiston, Maine

Sun Journal

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Pesticide notification

AUGUSTA — Mainers who want to be notified about agricultural pesticide spraying near their homes may sign up for the 2010 Maine Pesticide Notification Registry. Open enrollment closes Tuesday, June 15.

Any resident of Maine property within a quarter mile (500 feet for fruit trees or Christmas trees) of land where agricultural pesticides are applied by airplanes, helicopters, mist blowers or air-blast sprayers can be notified in advance.

To sign up or for more information, go to www.thinkfirstspraylast.org. To request a paper form, call the Maine Board of Pesticides Control at 287-2731.

Seniors club

BETHEL — The Bethel Senior Citizens Club will meet at 11 a.m. Wednesday, June 9, at the Pleasant Valley Grange Hall in West Bethel for a meeting and lunch. Price of lunch is \$7. Kathy Jo Farren from the Bethel Animal Hospital will speak on pet care.

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NEWS

Thursday, June 10, 2010

Fosters.com Citizen.com Foster's Daily Democrat The Citizen of Laconia Rochester Times Sanford News

WANT TO BE ALERTED ABOUT PESTICIDE SPRAYING?

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The Maine Board of Pesticides Control reports that Mainers who want to be notified about agricultural pesticide spraying near their homes have only until June 15 to sign up. Any resident of Maine property within a quarter of a mile — 500 feet for fruit trees and Christmas trees — of land where agricultural pesticides are applied by sprayers, planes helicopters or blowers can be notified in advance.

To sign up or to request further information, call 207-287-2731 or visit online at www.thinkfirstspraylast.org.



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TODAYS TOP STORIES



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Pesticide spraying in your neighborhood? Sign up and find out

There's now a way to get a heads up if pesticides are being sprayed in your neighborhood.

Under a new law, The Maine Department of Agriculture set up a registry where Maine residents can sign up and then be notified if pesticides are being sprayed within a quarter mile of their home.

The deadline to sign up is June 15.

Head to www.thinkfirstspraylast.org or call (207)287-2731. There is also a link to the website on the left-hand side of this page under the FYI icon.

Ted Homer - Producer

Posted: Friday, May 28 2010, 12:34 AM EDT

MAINE HEADLINES

Head of Maine park: Hikers should stay on trail

Maine jetport emergency training set

Ohio hiker found hurt in Maine's Baxter State Park

Air quality alerts eased in parts of northern New England

Maine Turnpike traffic to be heavy as holiday ends

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Canadian smoke lingers over northern New England

Associated Press Writer

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PORTLAND WEATHER



Today: Becoming mostly cloudy with rain and rain showers developing. Chance for thunderstorms. A little muggy. Highs 68 to 75. S to SW winds 5-10 MPH.

Tonight: Showers and thunderstorms early then clearing. Patchy fog with lows 44 to 53.

Wednesday: Sunny & warm. Highs 70 to 80. Coolest along the midcoast.

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Stocks had setback in May

NEW YORK (AP) -- Investors will be hoping that June brings better returns for the stock market, after a grim showing in May.

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CONSUMER INFO

Lawmakers look to ban drop-side cribs

WASHINGTON (AP) -- Drop-side cribs -- which have a side rail that moves up and down -- may soon be banned. Democratic Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand of New York has introduced a bill to outlaw the sale and manufacture of the cribs following the deaths of at least 32 infants and toddlers who suffocated or were strangled in drop-side cribs since 2000. ...

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The Public File is available to the public at WGME 13, 81 Northport Drive, Portland, Maine weekdays from 8:30am to 5:00pm.

WGME 13 TOP STORY



















There's now a way to get a heads up if pesticides are being sprayed in your neighborhood.

Under a new law, The Maine Department of Agriculture set up a registry where Maine residents can sign up and then be notified if pesticides are being sprayed within a quarter mile of their home.

The deadline to sign up is June 15.

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STORM TEAM13 WEATHER FORECAST

SOME MUCH NEEDED RAIN ON THE WAY

We've ended the month of May with a 2 inch deficit of rainfall, and we're starting the month of June with some rain on the way. A few scattered showers this morning but the widespread rain and thunderstorms will arrive this afternoon. Outdoor work to get done? This morning is the best time for that. Some of the thunderstorms will move through with gusty winds later today. Winds will stay out of the south/southwest and that will continue to push the smoke from those fires in Quebec to the north instead of here into Maine and New Hampshire. ...

[Details](#)



Important information regarding a pesticide registry

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- Elected Officials
- Boards & Committees
- Gorham Schools
- Agendas & Minutes
- Town Reports
- Codes & Ordinances
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- Important Links

Want To Know About Pesticides Sprayed Near Your Home? Pesticide Notification Registry Deadline June 15

AUGUSTA—Mainers who want to be notified about agricultural pesticide spraying near their homes this season have two more weeks to sign up.

Open enrollment closes June 15 for the 2010 Maine Pesticide Notification Registry. Any resident of Maine property within a quarter mile (500 feet for fruit trees or Christmas trees) of land where agricultural pesticides are applied by airplanes, helicopters, mist blowers, or air-blast sprayers can be notified in advance.

The registry, thought to be the only one of this type in the US, is a simple and free way for Mainers to be notified about agricultural pesticide spraying near their homes. The Maine State Legislature passed a law in 2009 that created the registry and gave the Maine Board of Pesticides Control the responsibility for its development, distribution, and maintenance.

To sign up on the registry, or for more information, go to www.thinkfirstspraylast.org. To request a paper signup form, call the Maine Board of Pesticides Control at 207-287-2731. After June 15, names will be held for the 2011 registry.

The Maine Board of Pesticides Control is the lead state agency for pesticide regulation. An administrative unit of the Maine Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources, policy decisions are made by a sevenmember, public board.

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State Representative L. Gary Knight

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E *Newsletter*

June 7, 2010

State Issues:

Mainers Cautioned Regarding Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

With many across the state opening their camps for the summer season, the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently offered a reminder of the dangers surrounding carbon monoxide poisoning. Officials reminded the public that carbon monoxide, or CO, is an odorless and colorless gas created by any combustion engine or device. If a device in an enclosed space is improperly vented, maintained or operated, CO can build up. It is easy to confuse CO poisoning with other illnesses; symptoms include headache, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, drowsiness and confusion, but do not include fevers.

Maine law requires CO detectors to be installed in all rental units, new homes and existing homes whenever there is a transfer of ownership or an addition of one or more bedrooms. The law covers camps and seasonal homes as well. These detectors may be found at most places that sell smoke detectors and should be installed with a battery back-up near where people sleep.

Advance Notification of Pesticide Spraying Available

The open enrollment period for Maine's Pesticide Notification Registry is coming to a close. This service, administered by the Maine Board of Pesticides Control, provides notification when agricultural pesticides are applied by airplanes, helicopters, mist blowers, or air-blast sprayers to property within a quarter mile of one's residence.

You may sign up for the registry online at <http://www.thinkfirstspraylast.org> or receive a paper application by calling the Maine Board of Pesticides Control at 207-287-2731. Any names received after June 15 will be held and added to the registry for 2011.

Find a Farmers' Market Online

The Maine Department of Agriculture offers a service to allow you to find a local farmers' market. Farmers' markets offer foods and agricultural products, harvested fresh and sold direct to you by area farmers. Markets are located throughout the state and each offers a variety of products.

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Maine Organic Farmers And Gardeners Association (MOFGA)'s Photos - Wall Photos

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Want to Know About Pesticides Sprayed Near Your Home?

Pesticide Notification Registry Deadline June 15

- Simple and **free** way to be notified about agricultural pesticide spraying near your home.
- Any resident of Maine property within 1,320 feet (500 feet for fruit trees and Christmas trees) of where agricultural pesticides are applied by airplanes, helicopters, mist blowers, or air-blast sprayers can be notified in advance.
- To be placed on the registry for notification after July 1, 2010, names must be submitted by **June 15, 2010**.
- To sign up on the registry, go to **www.thinkfirstspraylast.org**. To request a paper signup form, call the Maine Board of Pesticides Control at 207-287-2731.

The Maine Board of Pesticides Control is the lead state agency for pesticide regulation. An administrative unit of the Maine Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources, policy decisions are made by a seven-member, public board.



www.thinkfirstspraylast.org

ME Dept Agriculture Spraying qua 1

5/21/10, 10:45 AM

Go to www.thinkfirstspraylast.org to sign up. It takes about a minute.

Added June 8

14 people like this.



Barb Aldrich Sprague Thank you so much for posting this link! It's invaluable for those of us who are trying to stay spray free.

Tuesday at 5:29pm · Flag



Cheryl Grenier Meyer You are very welcome. i try to be very nice to the earth. I am heartsick over the oil leak

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Nick Bennett, NRCM staff scientist and watersheds project director** <nrcm@nrcm.org>

Date: Thu, Jun 10, 2010 at 3:04 PM

Subject: You deserve to know about pesticides used around you - sign up before June 15

To: pschlein@gmail.com



 **Natural Resources Council of Maine**

Dear Paul,

Pesticides are toxic chemicals. They are used all around us, but we don't always know it. **NRCM believes you have the right to know when they are being used near where you live, and we need you to stand up for that right.**

Right now, the board that oversees pesticide use in Maine is making decisions that will affect how much you and your family will know about the pesticides used around you. In 2009, the Legislature passed a law to require anyone spraying pesticides with an air blaster or from aircraft to inform people living within ¼ mile of the spray area who have signed up to receive that information.

Unfortunately, the Legislature weakened that law in 2010 by requiring that it apply only to agriculture – exempting golf courses and corporate lawns, for example – and by reducing the eligible distance for notification for certain industries.

Please urge the Board of Pesticides Control to restore the 2009 law and make its requirements more comprehensive. Tell them you have the right to protect yourself and your family, whether you live next to a golf course, an apple orchard, or an industrial facility. We need your help to ensure that you have this right!

[Email the Board of Pesticides Control](#) and tell them you want a strong, cost-free, registry that requires anyone in any business using aircraft or air blast equipment to notify you if they are spraying within ¼ mile of your home.

[Sign up](#) for **Maine's Pesticide Notification Registry** before June 15th and protect your family.

[Let the Board of Pesticides Control know](#) that you want a strong, free pesticide notification registry for all Maine citizens.

[Sign up for the existing free pesticide registry.](#) This will require that agricultural sprayers using aircraft or air blaster equipment notify you of their spraying. This registry will let you know if there are certain types of pesticide uses occurring near your house, and signing up will let the Board of Pesticides Control know that you care about this issue.

[Click here to email the Board of Pesticides Control](#) and [click here](#) to sign on to the existing free Pesticide Registry.

VERY IMPORTANT!

The Board of Pesticides Control will be holding a series of upcoming public meetings to gather information related to development of a comprehensive pesticide notification registry. If you live near these hearing locations, we will send you a reminder as these meetings dates approach:

- **Thursday, June 24 at 7:00 p.m. in Machias:** University of Maine, Sennett Hall, Clipper Lounge
- **Friday, June 25 at 9:00 a.m. in Machias:** University of Maine, Sennett Hall, Clipper Lounge
- **Thursday, July 8 at 6:00 p.m. in Presque Isle:** The Northeastland Hotel, 436 Main Street
- **Friday, July 23 at 9:30 a.m. in Portland:** Howard Johnson Plaza, 155 Riverside Street, Kennebec Room

If you are unable to attend one of the hearings but would like to submit comments, please email them to henry.jennings@maine.gov.

If you have questions about these hearings or plan to testify, please contact me at nick@nrcm.org or (207) 430-0116.

Thank you,



Nick Bennett
Staff Scientist and Watersheds Project Director

[Please forward this email to your friends.](#)



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Board of Pesticides Control Support No-cost Pesticide Registry

The Board of Pesticides Control is making decisions now that will affect how much you and your family know about pesticides sprayed in your neighborhood. **Email the Board of Pesticides Control below. (Note: personalized emails are most effective. We encourage you to edit the email below or replace it completely with your own words.)**

[Click here](#) to sign on to the existing free Pesticide Registry.

Background

In 2009, the Legislature passed a strong law requiring pesticide users to notify people nearby when they were spraying from an aircraft or using powered air blaster spraying equipment on the ground. The law established a free registry that Maine people could sign on to in order to receive information about these types of aerial spraying whenever it happened with ¼ mile of their homes. The registry required notification from whomever was doing the spraying: farmers, forest products companies, golf course managers, or any other pesticide users.

Unfortunately, in 2010, the Legislature greatly weakened the registry under pressure from pesticide users. For example, the Legislature changed the registry so that it applied only to agricultural pesticide sprayers. Now, people living near golf courses, corporate lawns or other areas that might be sprayed can longer receive notification under the free registry. They must sign on to a registry that costs \$20 per year, and they must also list all abutters living within 250 feet of their homes where pesticides who might use pesticides. Only about 20 people in the entire state have signed on to this registry because of the cost, the work required to list all abutters, and very limited marketing by the Board of Pesticides Control. **But people in areas where non-agricultural businesses spray pesticides should have the same right to know as people near farms, and it should not cost money.**

The Legislature also lowered the notification distance for certain pesticide sprayers – ornamental tree growers and apple growers – at the request of these two groups. This means that a blueberry farmer who sprays pesticides with an air blaster would have to notify people within ¼ mile of the spray area but an apple grower using the same pesticide and the same air blaster would only have to notify people within 500 feet. This makes no sense. **People should have the right to know when pesticides are being sprayed around them regardless of who is doing the spraying.**

Recipients

Board of Pesticides Control

Contact

Required fields

Title:

First Name:

Last Name:

Message

Subject:

Dear [Decision Maker],

Please personalize your message

Your Email:

Address 1:

Address 2:

City:

State / Province:

Choose a State



ZIP / Postal Code:

Phone Number:

Yes, I would like to receive periodic updates and communications from Natural Resources Council of Maine.

Remember me. [What's this?](#)

Please develop a strong, free, and comprehensive pesticide registry for all citizens in the state. We have the right to know if people are using pesticides near our homes. As a first step, please ask the Legislature to restore the provisions in the existing free registry that required all users of aircraft or air blaster equipment to notify people living within 1/4 mile of spray areas. The Legislature should not have weakened these provisions.

In addition, please develop a more comprehensive registry over time that includes other types of pesticide application technology.

Pesticides are toxic chemicals. All Maine citizens have the right to know when they are used nearby.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
[Your Address]
[City, State ZIP]

Send Message

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GUEST COLUMN

Be aware of pesticide exposure

5/13/10

By Heather Spalding and Meredith Small

When land managers and neighbors have a simple system to communicate about pesticide spraying, they all benefit. Farmers have no interest in putting human health at risk, and neighbors aren't trying to burden land managers with complicated and costly notification systems. Both want a system that is easy to understand and easy to use.

To that end, Maine's Board of Pesticides Control finds itself, once again, struggling to create effective and practical pesticide spray notification rules that work for everyone. Public participation in this process is essential.

The board has scheduled four opportunities for the public to provide input on the development of a comprehensive notification registry for all outdoor pesticide spraying. The first hearing on the prospective comprehensive registry will take place at 9:30 a.m. Friday, May 14, at the Bangor Motor Inn. This is an excellent opportunity for the BPC to hear from residents who want access to information about all outdoor pesticide spraying in their neighborhoods.

Friday's hearing comes just a week after the President's Cancer Panel acknowledged that the National Cancer Program has not adequately addressed the carcinogenic harm from environmental contaminants including pesticides. In a report to President Barack Obama, the panel of experts asserted that a large proportion of the 1.5 million American cancer cases diagnosed each year are attributable to chemical exposures. The panel urged that efforts to inform the public of such harmful exposures and how to prevent them must be increased, and that all levels of government, from federal to local, must work to protect every American from needless disease through rigorous regulation of environmental pollutants.

For decades the BPC, which is housed in Maine's Department of Agriculture, has tried to balance residents' pesticide exposure worries with industry's fears about regulation. Concern about pesticide contamination of organic farmland, pollinators such as bees, wildlife, water and air is rising. The public has become more aware of the dangerous health effects of pesticide exposure, even at low doses.

And demand for organic produce is on the increase, as is interest in low-impact forestry practices that don't rely on herbicides. At the same time, businesses reliant on toxic pesticides argue that additional regulation would bring an abrupt end to forestry operations, mosquito spraying, ornamental tree management and multi-generational farming activities throughout the state.

The BPC has focused on the importance of notification as a way to reduce the conflict that arises when pesticide drift inevitably happens. Lively

legislative debates have ensued for the past two years. The Legislature endorsed a free notification registry for people wishing to know about aerial and air-blast spraying in their neighborhoods, then watered it down to exclude nonagricultural applications, then, about two months ago, lobbed the detailed discussion work back to the BPC to figure out how the system actually would work and what would be the scope. And here we are today.

Fortunately, there is widespread support for the establishment of a comprehensive notification registry. Trade associations such as the Maine Wild Blueberry Commission, the Small Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association and the Maine Farm Bureau all have expressed support for the registry, as have 28 statewide environmental and public health organizations.

The big challenge will be in the details. First, comprehensive must mean what it implies — all outdoor pesticide applications regardless of technology and business sector. Information must be easily available and free. People living on or owning property within a quarter-mile of the intended aerial or air-blast spray area must have access to detailed information about chemicals being used. The BPC must establish notification zones for other pesticide application technologies, ensuring that neighbors have access to information if there is any possibility of drift exposure.

The BPC has dedicated an extraordinary amount of time and effort to this issue. It is time for residents who want strong pesticide regulations to speak out. Public participation in the scheduled hearings will help the BPC come out of the rulemaking process with a clear and unequivocal message for the next Legislature.

Any resident, owner, or lessee of property in Maine is entitled to join the existing notification registry for aerial and air-blast spraying, free of charge. It takes about a minute to register. Enroll online at www.thinkfirstspraylast.org, or call the BPC at 287-2731.

Heather Spalding is the associate director of the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association. Meredith Small is the executive director of Toxics Action Center.

Related Links

[Think First, Spray Last](#)

Portland Press Herald

'Yard-scapers' hope to slow the spread of lawn chemicals

The public-private group says that lush, green lawns can pose risks to people and the environment.

Kennebec Journal

Lawn chemicals a growing concern in state

Getting the job done with less risk

By *Mechele Cooper* mcooper@centralmaine.com

Staff Writer

May 10, 2010

AUGUSTA -- A group of Maine "yard-scapers" are trying to convince people they don't need to put so much fertilizer and pesticide on their lawns.

Gary Fish, manager of pesticide programs for the Maine Board of Pesticides Control, said more than 6.2 million pounds of yard-care pesticides were brought into Maine in 2007. This number has increased sevenfold since 1995 and coincides with an explosion in the number of yard-care companies in the state.

"Maine YardScaping is a partnership," Fish said. "It's public and private and grew out of an earlier collaboration with the Friends of Casco Bay. At the time we called it BayScaping. When that became a statewide effort, it became YardScaping."

Fish, who coordinates the program, said the group's main mission is to get people to "lower the bar on perfection."

He said too many people want to have the perfect lawn. But they can do that, he said, without an excessive amount of chemicals.

"They're spending a lot of money on things they don't need," he said. "If you look at the most recent recommendation from Cornell University and the University of Connecticut, most people are overdoing it. We're trying to convince them, through positive measures, that it's better all around for them, for their children, their pets and the environment, if they cut back. And hopefully they'll get to the point that they don't put anything on at all."

At the Maine YardScaping Partnership Web site, property owners can order a YardScape sign for their lawns to show they have pledged to reduce reliance on pesticides and fertilizers.

According to research done by Cornell University's Breast Cancer and Environmental Risk Factors program, active ingredients in turf pesticide products cause cancer.

The products also contain other ingredients that may be hazardous to people and the environment that are not listed on the product label. Federal law does not require the names of inert ingredients be listed.

Barbara Welch, lake biologist with the state Department of Environmental Protection, said turf experts and scientists have sampled Maine soils and found they are rich in phosphorus.

"Of all the samples sent to the lab in the last five years, 80 percent of them did not need phosphorus to grow grass," she said. "They don't need the nitrogen either. Nitrogen (from fertilizer) is washing off and causing algae blooms and red tide, and phosphorus (from fertilizer) is causing problems in lakes and streams."

Phosphorus also causes algae blooms and excessive weed growth, she said.

Welch said state legislators passed a law two years ago that required fertilizer retailers to post signs explaining when it is appropriate to use fertilizer that has phosphorous so people don't overfeed their lawns.

"We do compliance checks, and 87 percent of the stores did have the signs posted," she said.

John Jemison at the University of Maine Cooperative Extension said he believes people in Maine are more aware of the consequences of excess use of chemicals than in most places.

Jemison said he visits his family in Memphis, Tenn., every spring and sees an unacceptable amount of fertilizer use.

"I work a lot with agriculture and what I smell when I'm down there, you'd think I was in the fertilizer and pesticide aisle in a big box store," Jemison said. "I don't see a lot of dandelions blooming down there, so it leads me to believe either people here are more sensitive to it and don't mind weeds, or are under economic stress and are unwilling to pay to treat their fields, or they are concerned about it.

"Yes, there is a fair amount of material used in this state, but it isn't nearly as much as what is used in the south."

He said all the fertilizer used in the south ends up in the Gulf of Mexico, which has a dead zone.

"If there were a place to convince people to use less, it would be there," he said.

According to the National Geographic Web site, huge amounts of fertilizer and nutrient-rich sediment are dumped into the gulf from the Mississippi River, feeding algae blooms so large that they starve the ocean of oxygen.

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UMaine Today

Summer 2010

Weed Warfare

In the epic struggle, Eric Gallandt is the small-scale growers' staunchest ally

by Kristen Andresen



Eric Gallandt

When fictional poltergeists and phantoms descended on Manhattan, New Yorkers called Ghostbusters.

When hairy galinsoga, ragweed and redroot pigweed — which are very real and equally scary, by the way — descend on Maine, farmers call weed busters. Specifically, they call Eric Gallandt and his team of researchers at the University of Maine.

For small-scale organic farmers, weeds can be as haunting and confounding as shape-shifters. They compete with crops for water, nutrients and, if they grow more quickly than the desired plants, light. This can cause the quality of a crop to suffer, and in some cases can reduce or even eliminate yield, which cuts into growers' profits. Left to their own devices, weeds can quickly proliferate.

Organic standards forbid the use of synthetic herbicides, which are inexpensive and highly effective. The alternative is cultivation — weeding with tractor implements, a hoe or by hand between rows — but that's costly, time-consuming and kills far fewer weeds.

Redroot Pigweed; Illustration by Carrie Graham



Gallandt, a UMaine associate professor of weed ecology and management, has made it his mission to help small-scale growers who plant diversified crops. He takes a systemic approach to weed management by focusing on the ways in which growers address the seed bank — the seeds at the soil surface and the seeds incorporated in the soil.

As any gardener knows, weeds grow like, well, weeds. They'll do whatever it takes to ensure their survival, and a lot of this depends on the seed bank. Some weeds have seeds that remain dormant for a period. Others rely on animals to spread their seeds and still more develop seeds that can remain viable in the soil for decades.

In the past, Gallandt has researched microbial decay of seeds in the soil, looking for conditions that may accelerate seed loss, but without much success. He's currently working with small farmers to find ways to manipulate the environment so that there are fewer weed seeds in the soil to begin with.

“How do we get the number of weeds killed during cultivation higher?” Gallandt asks. “How can we get it closer to that of an herbicide? And if we can't, how can we make the tools more effective? If we have to use them twice, can we make it even more efficient?”

According to U.S. Department of Agriculture census data, more than 300,000 new farms began operating nationwide between 2002 and 2007. The trend among these farms is that they tend to have diverse crops, fewer acres, lower sales and younger operators who also work off-farm. In fact, the majority of U.S. farms are smaller operations.

More than 36 percent are classified as residential/lifestyle farms, with sales of less than \$250,000 and operators with a primary occupation other than farming. Another 21 percent are retirement farms, which have sales of less than \$250,000 and operators who reported they are retired.

The sector may be growing, but weed management technology hasn't kept up. Until recently, the options for small-scale farmers have been hand tools. Tractors are engineered for larger, less diversified plots of land.

“If you look at smaller organic farms, they're basically using hoes,” Gallandt says. “They're very nice hoes. They're precision hoes. But they're hoes. The technology hasn't changed much since the 1800s.”

Until recently, that is.

Common Lambsquarters; Illustration by Carrie Graham



Gallandt and his team spent last summer researching the effectiveness of the Weed Master, an innovative Finnish machine that's best described as a small, human-powered tractor. During a sabbatical in Copenhagen several years ago,

Gallandt met European colleagues who work on weed management in organic systems. One of them introduced him to the Weed Master.

The device combines the best aspects of hand tools — lightweight, small, portable — with the versatility and add-ons of a tractor. Gallandt wanted to know if a machine like this would benefit Maine farmers, and he received a grant from the Maine Agriculture Center to import a Weed Master and tools such as a flame weeder.

During the 2009 growing season, he worked with three Maine organic farms — Peacemeal Farm in Dixmont, run by UMaine alumnus Mark Guzzi; Fisher Farm in Winterport, run by Rose, Joe and Dennis Fisher and UMaine alumna Beth Haines; and Fail Better Farm in Montville, run by Clayton Carter. Students at UMaine’s Black Bear Food Guild ran a concurrent experiment comparing the efficiency of weeding by hand or with a short- or long-handled hoe, a wheel hoe and the Weed Master.

They found that overall, the Weed Master didn’t provide superior weed control, but it was exponentially faster than cultivating by hand or with any of the other tools. And in a small-scale operation, time is money.

“Farmers were pretty impressed with how fast it worked and how easy it was to adjust the tools to the unusual crops and planting patterns that they have,” Gallandt said. “It was very simple.”

Gallandt and his colleagues in New Hampshire and Vermont recently wrote a \$2.4 million grant to purchase Weed Masters, along with specialty hand tools from Johnny’s Selected Seeds in Albion, Maine, for on-farm research in those states, as well.

“Farmers could really use some innovation on their farms,” Gallandt said. “We’d like to retool northern New England for small- to mid-scale diversified vegetable farming by getting farmers exposure to innovative tools.”

Hairy Galinsoga; Illustration by Carrie Graham



The cost of importing the Weed Master may be prohibitive for many small-scale organic farmers — the whole setup runs a little less than \$7,000. And in certain situations, hand-powered tools may be a better alternative anyway.

But innovation is more important now than it has ever been. The fact that the number of such farmers is growing points to a need for more effective products and methods. But so does the prospect of climate change. According to Gallandt, an overall rise or fall in temperature won’t make a huge difference, but variability in weather patterns will.

That’s because the window for ideal cultivation conditions is very small — and timing is everything. The weather needs to be moderately dry at the same time the weeds are at their smallest growth stage — called the “white thread” phase — early in the season. An evening rainstorm can take regular weed-killing rates — usually around 80 percent to 85 percent — down to 60 percent. That means more passes with a hoe, which means more time, which means more labor, which means money lost.

“Organic farmers are going to be in trouble,” Gallandt says. “Cultivation is really dependent on the environment and as the weather begins to get more unpredictable, you can see why we’re more interested in some of these

tools with high efficiency rates.”

Weeds can tell us a lot about our environment, the weather and the farming practices we employ. Some, such as the edible wood sorrel or the attractive common purslane, are even fairly pleasant. But most of them are as pesky as the poltergeists in Ghostbusters and as hard to bring down as the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man.

Gallandt's advice to farmers and gardeners? Persevere. And don't be afraid. He and his team of weed busters will be around to help.

“Over time, as you start managing the seed bank, you start to solve some of your weed problems, but the things that you still see are the things that are slipping through in the unfriendly environment you've created. You end up with a new species that has a trait that allows it to thrive in the environment it's in,” Gallandt says. “They're basically doing their job, and to think that we're going to solve this problem and make them go away completely goes against eons of evolutionary strategy.”

[EPA: United States Environmental Protection Agency](#)

[A-Z index](#)

News Releases By Date

EPA Moves to Terminate All Uses of Insecticide Endosulfan to Protect Health of Farmworkers and Wildlife

Release date: 06/09/2010

Contact Information: Dale Kemery kemery.dale@epa.gov 202-564-7839 202-564-4355

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is taking action to end all uses of the insecticide endosulfan in the United States. Endosulfan, which is used on vegetables, fruits, and cotton, can pose unacceptable neurological and reproductive risks to farmworkers and wildlife and can persist in the environment.

New data generated in response to the agency's 2002 decision have shown that risks faced by workers are greater than previously known. EPA also finds that there are risks above the agency's level of concern to aquatic and terrestrial wildlife, as well as to birds and mammals that consume aquatic prey which have ingested endosulfan. Farmworkers can be exposed to endosulfan through inhalation and contact with the skin. Endosulfan is used on a very small percentage of the U.S. food supply and does not present a risk to human health from dietary exposure.

Makhteshim Agan of North America, the manufacturer of endosulfan, is in discussions with EPA to voluntarily terminate all endosulfan uses. EPA is currently working out the details of the decision that will eliminate all endosulfan uses, while incorporating consideration of the needs for growers to timely move to lower-risk pest control practices.

Under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), EPA must consider endosulfan's risks and benefits. While EPA implemented various restrictions in a 2002 re-registration decision, EPA's phaseout is based on new data and scientific peer review, which have improved EPA's assessment of the ecological and worker risks from endosulfan. EPA's 2010 revised ecological risk assessment reflects a comprehensive review of all available exposure and ecological effects information for endosulfan, including independent external peer-reviewed recommendations made by the endosulfan Scientific Advisory Panel.

Endosulfan, an organochlorine insecticide first registered in the 1950s, also is used on ornamental shrubs, trees, and herbaceous plants. It has no residential uses.

For more information: <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/reregistration/endosulfan/endosulfan-cancl-fs.html>

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News Release

May 19, 2010

Catherine Puckett
Don Tillitt

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Commonly Used Herbicide Adversely Affects Fish Reproduction

Atrazine, one of the most commonly used herbicides in the world, has been shown to affect reproduction of fish, according to a new U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) study.

“Concentrations of atrazine commonly found in agricultural streams and rivers caused reduced reproduction and spawning, as well as tissue abnormalities in laboratory studies with fish,” said USGS scientist Donald Tillitt, the lead author of the study published in *Aquatic Toxicology*.

Fathead minnows were exposed to atrazine at the USGS Columbia Environmental Research Center in Columbia, Mo., and observed for effects on egg production, tissue abnormalities and hormone levels. Fish were exposed to concentrations ranging from zero to 50 micrograms per liter of atrazine for up to 30 days. All tested levels of exposure are less than the USEPA Office of Pesticides Aquatic Life Benchmark of 65 micrograms per liter for chronic exposure of fish. Thus, substantial reproductive effects were observed in this study at concentrations below the USEPA water-quality guideline.

Study results show that normal reproductive cycling was disrupted by atrazine and fish did not spawn as much or as well when exposed to atrazine. Researchers found that total egg production was lower in all atrazine-exposed fish, as compared to the non-exposed fish, within 17 to 20 days of exposure. In addition, atrazine-exposed fish spawned less and there were abnormalities in reproductive tissues of both males and females.

Atrazine is one of the most commonly used herbicides in the world and is used on most corn, sugarcane and sorghum acreage in the United States. It is used to stop pre- and post-emergence broadleaf and grassy weeds, and is generally applied in the spring. Thus, noted Tillitt, atrazine concentrations are greatest in streams during the spring, when most fish in North America are attempting to reproduce.

“The reproductive effects observed in this study warrant further investigation and evaluation of the potential risks posed by atrazine, particularly in wild populations of fish from streams in agricultural areas with high use of this herbicide,” said Tillitt.

The results of this study add an important ecological perspective to findings on atrazine concentrations in streams reported by the USGS National Water-Quality Assessment (NAWQA) Program, as well as others, and highlights the potential risks to aquatic species of this high-use chemical, Tillitt said.

“Results of studies over the past 20 years show that atrazine is the most frequently detected pesticide in agricultural streams and rivers nationwide, and particularly in the Corn Belt states,” according to Robert Gilliom, Chief of the NAWQA Pesticide National Synthesis Project. “Atrazine concentration data for Corn Belt streams and rivers show that 21-day average concentrations, similar to the exposure conditions studied by Dr. Tillitt, exceeded levels found to affect fish reproduction for most sites and years sampled.”

Endocrine-active compounds are associated with intersex and reproductive effects in fish. These chemicals have the ability to adversely affect endocrine systems and include some pesticides, PCBs, certain heavy metals, certain household products, and many pharmaceuticals specifically designed to interact with endocrine function.

"Atrazine Reduces Reproduction in Fathead Minnow (*Pimephales promelas*)," was authored by U.S. Geological Survey scientists Donald Tillitt, Diana Papoulias, Jeffrey Whyte, and Catherine Richter. It appears in this week's edition of *Aquatic Toxicology*.

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Pesticides in kids linked to ADHD, study finds

Researcher advises parents to buy organic, wash produce

By JoNel AlecciaHealth writer
updated 8:43 a.m. ET, Mon., May 17, 2010

Exposure to pesticides used on common kid-friendly foods — including frozen blueberries, fresh strawberries and celery — appears to boost the chances that children will be diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD, new research shows.

Youngsters with high levels of pesticide residue in their urine, particularly from widely used types of insecticide such as malathion, were more likely to have ADHD, the behavior disorder that often disrupts school and social life, scientists in the United States and Canada found.

Kids with higher-than-average levels of one pesticide marker were nearly twice as likely to be diagnosed with ADHD as children who showed no traces of the poison.

"I think it's fairly significant. A doubling is a strong effect," said Maryse F. Bouchard, a researcher at the University of Montreal in Quebec and lead author of the study published Monday in the journal *Pediatrics*.

The take-home message for parents, according to Bouchard: "I would say buy organic as much as possible," she said. "I would also recommend washing fruits and vegetables as much as possible."

Diet is a major source of pesticide exposure in children, according to the National Academy of Sciences, and much of that exposure comes from favorite fruits and vegetables. In 2008, detectable concentrations of malathion were found in 28 percent of frozen blueberry samples, 25 percent of fresh strawberry samples and 19 percent of celery samples, a government report found.

ADHD affects 4.5 million U.S. kids

Bouchard's study is the largest to date to look at the effect of pesticides on child development and behavior, including ADHD, which affects an estimated 4.5 million U.S. children. About 2.5 million kids take medication for the condition, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Bouchard and her colleagues measured levels of six pesticide metabolites in the urine of 1,139 children ages 8 to 15 selected from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey between 2000 and 2004. The study included 119 children who were diagnosed with ADHD.

Unlike other studies of pesticides' impact, Bouchard's sample provided a glimpse into average insecticide exposure in the general population of children, not a specialized group, such as children of farmworkers. Because certain pesticides leave the body after three to six days, the presence of residue shows that exposure is likely constant, Bouchard said.

She found that kids with a 10-fold increase in the kind of metabolites left in the body after malathion

exposure were 55 percent more likely to be diagnosed with ADHD. Because the researchers didn't review the kids' diets, they couldn't say why some children had such high levels of pesticide residue. Children are at greater risk from pesticides because their young bodies are still developing and may not metabolize chemicals as well as adults'.

The most alarming finding was a near-doubling in odds of ADHD diagnoses among kids with higher-than-average levels of the most common of the six metabolites detected. Kids with high levels of dimethyl thiophosphate were 93 percent more likely to have the disorder than children with with undetectable levels of the marker.

The research may add to anxiety about ADHD, which has no known cause, said Dr. Andrew Adesman, chief of developmental and behavioral pediatrics at the Steven and Alexandra Cohen Children's Medical Center of New York.

"It does seem to suggest that at non-extreme or more typical levels, there does seem to be some increased risk," said Adesman, who is on the professional advisory board for Children and Adults with ADHD, an advocacy group.

Pesticides prey on nervous system

Boucher studied organophosphate pesticides, which account for as much as 70 percent of the pesticide use in the U.S. They work by interfering with the nervous systems of insects, but have a similar effect in mammals, including humans. Most people in the U.S. have residues of the products in their urine.

Cheminova, the Danish firm that is the leading manufacturer of malathion in the world, declined to comment on the conclusions of the new research. Diane Allemang, vice president for global regulatory affairs, said she hadn't seen the study.

Parents of children with ADHD, however, said Bouchard's work will give them one more than thing to worry about.

"We're all completely obsessed with food," said Jamie Norman, 32, of Freeburg, Ill., whose 6-year-old son,

Aidan, was diagnosed with ADHD six months ago.

The stimulant medication Aidan takes, Adderall XR, depresses his appetite, so Norman said she's always trying to find good foods that he'll want to eat. Other parents of kids with ADHD choose to use diet, not medication, to control the disorder and they're constantly monitoring food, too.

News that some of the best foods for kids might be tainted with something linked to ADHD is worrisome, Norman said.

"I've known for some time that strawberries, in particular, contain high levels of pesticide, but as far as frozen fruit, I don't give that a second thought," she said.

Buy organic, make sure to wash

The best advice for parents — and anyone who wants to avoid pesticides — is to choose foods least likely to contain them. The Environmental Working Group, a consumer advocacy organization, [advises shoppers to buy organic versions of a dozen fruits and vegetables](#) that grow in the ground or are commonly eaten with the skin, because they're most likely to be contaminated.

Make sure to wash all fruits and vegetables under



cold running tap water and scrub firm-skinned produce with a brush. Be sure to rinse frozen fruits and vegetables, too.

But don't wash produce with soap. The Food and Drug Administration says that could leave behind residues of detergent, yet more chemicals that everyone would do best to avoid.

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June 13, 2010

Old store overrun by rats

Candy-eating rodents entrenched at former China Village General Store

By [Amy Calderacalder@mainetoday.com](mailto:Amy_Calderacalder@mainetoday.com)
Staff Writer

CHINA -- It's going to take at least a month to rid the former China Village General Store of dozens of rats living in and around the Main Street building, according to officials.



[click image to enlarge](#)

RAT RUN: A rat scurries along the foundation of the closed China Village General Store recently after coming out of a hole in the building. In a short time, several rats could be seen and more were heard moving in the walls.

Staff photo by David Leaming



[click image to enlarge](#)

OH RATS: Rats now have access to the former China Village General Store, where containers of food inside have been knocked off shelves and opened.

Staff photo by David Leaming

[Select images available for purchase in the
Maine Today Photo Store](#)

The rats are feeding off candy bars, boxes of cereal and other food left inside the store, which closed in February 2009, Code Enforcement Officer Scott Pierz said.

The town took action after neighbors and people visiting the nearby post office on Main Street saw rats around the building and called the town office to complain, Town Manager Dan L'Heureux said.

"They were rightfully concerned about the health, welfare and safety of the area," L'Heureux said.

Pierz said no one realized there were rats in the building before the complaints. When the store closed last year, paper was taped to the windows and recently, the glue of the tape dried up and the paper came off.

"I took photos through the front window," he said. "I snapped a picture of one of the rodents on the candy bar shelf, eating a Snickers bar."

Pierz said Raymond Winn, who previously operated the store, told him the food was left in the building after it closed last year because he thought the company supplying the food would come and remove the inventory, but that didn't happen.

Modern Pest Control, Inc. of Augusta is dealing with the problem. Workers have placed bait boxes containing a substance approved by the federal Environmental Protection Agency outside the store, according to Mike Peaslee, the company's technical manager. The substance ultimately kills the rodents and they go off to die, typically in a burrow underground where rats nest. The boxes are designed so that other animals, such as cats, cannot get inside them, he said.

Inside the building, glue traps and regular rat traps are set and the company will remove the trapped rodents, he said.

"We've trapped multiple rats over the course of the last week," Peaslee said. "It's going to be an ongoing project. We'll be there on a regular basis until it is resolved. It's hard to say (how long), but probably at least about 30 days."

A neighbor told Pierz he noticed rats in his house in February, but did not know they had come from the store, or that there was a problem there. Peaslee said his pest company is working with a neighbor to remove rats as part of the overall project.

Pierz and the town's health officer, Lisa McLaggan, visited the site after receiving complaints about two weeks ago and called the state Department of Agriculture, Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control. Pierz also had to determine ownership of the building, which was not clear.

Raymond and his wife, Belinda Winn, owned and operated the store before it closed.

"That's (store ownership) still up in the air and I really can't say too much about it right now," Raymond Winn said this week.

But William Gillespie, attorney for Border Trust, which held the mortgage on the building and property, said when the bank was notified of the rat problem, it immediately hired Modern Pest Control to deal with the rat infestation.

While the bank took control of the building, it does not technically own it yet, Gillespie, of Topsham, said Thursday.

The Winns filed for Chapter 13 bankruptcy but then voluntarily filed a motion to dismiss their petition, according to Gillespie.

"They still own it (property) until I get through with three or four more legal proceedings and then the bank will take it," he said. "In their motion to dismiss, they stated that they could not reasonably fund the Chapter 13 costs."

Meanwhile, Gillespie said there is another problem at the building. The Winns allowed the license on the underground fuel tanks to expire and the law does not provide for relicensing, so Border Trust must have them removed. The cost will be about \$20,000, he said.

"Even though the tanks are virtually new, you've got to dig them up, inspect them and bury them again," Gillespie said.

Peaslee and Pierz said removing the food inside the store now is not recommended, as the rodents would leave the site to look for other food sources. Peaslee advised waiting two to three weeks before removing the food.

Pierz said Raymond Winn cordoned off the outside of the store and placed "no trespassing" signs there. The building is locked and people are asked not to go near it, Pierz said. He also recommended neighbors mow any tall grass they may have on their properties so rats cannot hide there, and keep an eye on their pets.

Gillespie said a foreclosure auction to sell the property will be in a month to six weeks, once the property is cleaned up.

"I don't think there is going to be any difficulty with that once the rodents are cleaned out of there," he said. "The new purchaser is certainly going to want to put the building in first-class condition to operate."

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Find this article at:

http://www.onlinesentinel.com/news/old-store-overrun-by-rats_2010-06-12.html

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May 12

Natural Foodie: Cultivated blueberries land on the 'Dirty Dozen' list

By [Avery Yale Kamila](#)
Staff Writer

This year's Dirty Dozen list is a good tool for shoppers looking to avoid pesticides in their fruits and vegetables, but bad news for blueberries.

[click image to enlarge](#)

Cultivated blueberries were added to the Dirty Dozen list as one of the top fruits and vegetables harboring pesticide residues. The list advises consumers to buy organic when shopping for items on the Dirty Dozen.

Press Herald file



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NEW GLUTEN-FREE RESOURCE FOR MAINE

WHETHER YOU'RE LOOKING for a list of restaurants that offer gluten-free meals or information about celiac support groups, check out the new www.glutenfreemaine.com. The site is the brainchild of Richard Lawlor and Roy Silvernail. Share your thoughts about what you'd like to see on the site at ideas@glutenfreemaine.com.

LEARN ABOUT THE RAW FOOD LIFESTYLE

MARY JAQUA will give a free talk about raw food from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday at the Winslow Public Library, 136 Halifax St. For more information: 873-7404.

For the first time, the guide compiled by the Environmental Working Group includes the much-touted superfood on the list. The fruit clocks in at No. 5, ahead of nectarines and after apples.

In Maine, where native wild blueberries reign supreme over their plump, cultivated cousins, we can take some comfort from the fact that the data used to compile the list only evaluated those big berries.

The list, which is now in its sixth edition, was first produced in 1995. Using data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration, the D.C.-based nonprofit creates the list by ranking the pesticide contamination found on the 50 most popular fruits and vegetables.

"We are concerned that blueberries are on the list and that wild blueberries are not differentiated from cultivated," said Dave Bell, a spokesperson for the Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine. "We're also concerned about the big picture. People need to be eating fruits and vegetables."

In response, Leeann Brown, a spokesperson for the Environmental Working Group, said, "we're not trying to undermine the need for fruits and vegetables with this list."

Instead, the organization hopes the list will be used by shoppers who have limited funds to spend on organic produce.

"If you can't go organic with all your purchases, (the items on the list are) where you should put your priority," Brown said.

According to Bell, the federal government doesn't collect pesticide residue data for wild blueberries. Bell said some of Maine's larger growers do track this information, but it is not released to the public.

Maine's wild blueberry industry has been investigating organic practices for years, Bell said, and recently helped fund research at the University of Maine that produced technical guidelines for organic growers.

Bell pointed out that in comparison to growers of other fruits such as apples, blueberry farmers use fewer pesticides.

"On average, our growers use two to three pesticide treatments a year," Bell said.

However, pesticides are still very much a part of wild blueberry production in Maine. This was highlighted most recently in late 2004 and early 2005, when Maine's two largest blueberry growers, Cherryfield Foods Inc. and Jasper Wyman & Son, agreed to halt aerial pesticide spraying after a coalition of Maine environmental groups threatened to sue the companies for violations of the federal Clean Water Act.

This change didn't reduce or eliminate the amount of pesticides being used by these companies; it just altered the application method from aerial to ground spraying.

"The bulk of organic, wild blueberries come from Quebec," Bell said. "It's a very tough market for us to compete in. One of the challenges Maine has is the fruit fly maggot, which they don't have up in Quebec."

Despite these challenges, more Maine wild blueberry growers are opting to go organic.

The Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association, the state's organic certifying agent, reports growth in the number of farms seeking organic certification for both wild and cultivated blueberries.

"Especially in Washington County, we're seeing more people applying for certification," said Melissa White Pillsbury, MOFGA's marketing coordinator.

Currently, the state has 72 certified organic growers who farm 1,600 acres of wild blueberries.

Yet this remains a small percentage of the 60,000 acres of wild blueberries grown in Maine.

Pillsbury added that the organic blueberry industry in Maine also received a boost from the recent certification of Merrill Blueberry Farms' large-scale processing and storage facility in Ellsworth. This is the first major processing facility in Maine to gain organic certification.

"The list the EWG put out underscores the idea of knowing your farmer and talking with them about what they use," said Pillsbury.

"If you don't know your farmer and can't have that conversation, that's when certification is so important. The certification is having that conversation for you."


Staff Writer Avery Yale Kamila can be contacted at 791-6297 or at:

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Cultivated blueberries were added to the Dirty Dozen list as one of the top fruits and vegetables harboring pesticide residues. The list advises consumers to buy organic when shopping for items on the Dirty Dozen.

Find this article at:

http://www.pressherald.com/life/foodandddining/cultivated-blueberries-land-on-the-dirty-dozen-list_2010-05-12.html?searchterm=dirty+dozen

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May 30

Maine Gardener: Talk about peer pressure: It's a bug-eat-bug world out there today

By [Tom Atwell](#)
Staff Writer

A couple of weeks ago I wrote a column about the spread of integrated pest management in greenhouses. The almost universal response was: What about IPM at home?

TOM'S TIP

THIS IS THE old-fashioned Memorial Day weekend. This is the day where you can practically guarantee anything you put out in your garden will not be damaged by frost.

GET BUSY AND start planting – geraniums, cemetery boxes, impatiens, begonias and agapanthus.

Yes, it works. And more assistance exists than there was just a couple of weeks ago.

James Dill – who was one of the main sources for the greenhouse IPM column – sent me a link to a new IPM website for homeowners. It is pmo.umext.maine.edu/homeowner and I went to it and immediately blew a half-hour looking at pictures of pests that I have seen in the garden.

The site not only provides help for garden pests, but also for insects that you find in your home.

“The site provides identification not only for pests, but also for curiosities, like giant water bugs and other things,” he said.

And that helps, said Dill, because before you can use beneficial insects to control problems in the yard, you have to know what the pests are.

“You have to monitor your own situation,” he said. “You can check out your insects on the website, or you can send them to our lab, or if you have a digital camera you can just send us a picture of it.”

The samples should be sent to the Pest Management Office, University of Maine, Orono 04473-1295. You can print out a form clicking onto the Insect Diagnostic Lab bug on the homeowner IPM website or call 1-800-287-0279.

You can purchase many different bugs and other treatments that will help keep pests out of your gardens.

“The first thing to look for is nematodes, specifically Hb nematodes, with a big, long scientific name that you’ll never have to know,” Dill said. “Those work fairly well as an organic on white grubs.”

The white grubs in the lawn grow up to be, among other things, Japanese beetles, which feast on roses, raspberries, hops and other plants in your garden each year. In addition, the grubs can eat the roots of your grass, which makes it die in spots, and attract skunks, which dig up the lawn in an attempt to eat the grubs.

The nematodes – basically very small worms – come in a sponge that you put in water and then spread over the lawn.

Other biological controls that can be used are ladybugs to fight aphids.

“As an aside, I would tell you that probably by the strictest sense of the law you need a permit for these biocontrols, even if it is the ladybug that is found here,” Dill said. “But for the homeowner, no one is going to mind.”

One place Dill recommended for purchasing biocontrols is The Green Spot in Nottingham, N.H. The company website is

greenmethods.com/website.

Mike Cherim, company director, said nematodes will work on the grubs into June and again later in the summer, so it is not too late to order them. But he also sells Sf nematodes and Sc nematodes.

“They (the Sc and Sf nematodes) work on fungus gnats and cutworms during the nighttime phase,” Cherim said. “The difference between nematodes is how deeply they go into the soil. The Hb cruises into the soil looking for grubs, while the Sc ambushes up top. A cutworm comes along and it will jump to it.”

The nematodes probably will have to be applied every year although some will survive the winter.

“It makes sense, because they depend on their prey,” Cherim said. “If they are effective, the prey has pretty much gone away, so they will go away, too.”

His company says ladybugs are effective on aphids, but some advertising for ladybugs implies they will do more than they probably do in practice.

“They will theoretically eat such things as spider mites, thrips and whitefly if they happen upon them, but they are really good at aphids,” he said.

Another biocontrol he sells is a moth-egg parasite called *Trichogramma* spp. Moths and butterflies are nice, but their worms eat a wide variety of crops.

“But you have to know what moth you are going after and when it hatches out for it to be effective,” he said. They are sent as ready-to-emerge grain-moth eggs, and include varieties that fight worms that damage cabbage crops, gypsy moths, tent caterpillars and so on.

But the key is knowing what pest you’re fighting, so you can use the right biological control.

“Google is your friend,” Cherim said. “You can find most of this online.”

Another thing he mentioned is that with biocontrols, you are not going to kill every one of the harmful insects. But if used properly, you are going to eliminate enough of them.

Dill said that another program in addition to his backyard IPM website is the Green Bug Education program.

The idea is to get box stores and any other place that sells pesticides to buy into the idea of educating consumers to use the right pesticides.

For example, he said, Bt is a popular organic pesticide used for caterpillars. But if you have sawfly larvae, it has no effect at all. And customers have to know that.

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Find this article at:

<http://www.pressherald.com/life/homeandgarden/Maine-Gardener-Talk-about-peer-pressure-Its-a-bug-eat-bug-world-out-there-today-.html>

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MailOnline

Organic farms 'produce less than HALF as much food as conventional ones'

By [Daily Mail Reporter](#)

Last updated at 12:57 PM on 5th May 2010

The benefits to wildlife and increases in biodiversity from organic farming are much lower than previously thought, scientists said today.

Organic farms may be seen as wildlife friendly, but the benefits to birds, bees and butterflies do not compensate for the lower yields produced, according to research by the University of Leeds.

Experts from the Faculty of Biological Science carried out detailed, like-for-like comparisons of organic and conventional farming.



Organic farming: The benefits to birds, bees and butterflies do not compensate for the lower yields produced, new research concludes (file picture)

The research found organic farms had, on average, 12 per cent more biodiversity in terms of the number and variety of plants, birds, earthworms and insects.

However, the organic farms in the study produced less than half of the yield of their conventional counterparts, according to the results which are published online in Ecology Letters.

'Over the next 40 years, we're going to have to double food production worldwide to keep pace with population increases,' says Professor Tim Benton, who led the project.

'Our results show that to produce the same amount of food in the UK using organic rather than conventional means, we'd need to use twice the amount of land for agriculture.

'As the biodiversity benefits of organic farming are small, then the lower yield may be a luxury we can't afford, particularly in the more productive areas of the UK.'

The Leeds project, funded under the Rural Economy Land Use programme, aimed to see if organic farming was still as good for wildlife if these landscape effects were taken out of the equation.

The research looked at two areas in Central South West England and the North Midlands, taking into account over 30 variables covering climate, topography, socio-economic conditions, land use and soil type.

Thirty-two organic and non-organic farms were paired together, some in 'hotspot' regions with many organic farms and others in 'coldspots' with very few, to help identify any cumulative impacts over a wider area.

Comparisons were made also between individual fields, with 192 fields sampled in all.

Comparing farm by farm, the researchers found a 55 per cent drop in yield compared to a 12.4 per cent increase in biodiversity.

However, comparisons between larger areas found that 'hotspots' with a greater density of organic farming showed a 9.1 per cent increase in biodiversity across the board.

The research also threw up some unforeseen negative impacts. Conventional farms in 'hotspots' tended to use higher levels of herbicides than those in 'coldspots' to counteract the seeds coming across from their more weed-tolerant neighbours.

And numbers of small farmland birds were actually lower on organic farms, as these tend to attract birds such as magpies and jays, which prey on smaller birds.



Latest Assault on Goldman Sachs: Bed Bugs?

Banking Powerhouse Has Been Spraying in Jersey City, Sources Say; Critters More Common in Offices Than People Think

By RICH BLAKE

June 15, 2010—

As if a nearly two-year siege of [negative attention](#) hasn't been enough of a distraction for Goldman Sachs, now the controversial investment bank appears to be battling a potential bed bug problem.

Employees who work in Goldman's Jersey City, N.J., office tower have been moved from certain floors and ordered out of the building at times because exterminators have been in checking and spraying for bed bugs, said two separate sources at the firm. Neither source was comfortable being quoted by name, citing company policy.

A Goldman Sachs spokeswoman issued ABCNews.com a statement: "We're always focused on our facilities and there are no issues." The spokeswoman would not comment on whether the building had been treated.

Bug-Sniffing Dogs

However, sources at the firm said exterminators last month were spraying for bed bugs on several different floors in Goldman's Jersey City office building. Floors were evacuated and dogs and pesticides were brought in. One person was moved to another floor and not allowed to take anything from the desk.

Another non-Goldman source but who is connected with the office tower's operations confirmed the spraying but added that it was done as a precautionary measure following a report from some employees there who had experienced issues with bed bugs -- outside the office. Exterminators told ABC News that companies rarely, if ever, bring in dogs and pesticides as a precautionary measure but only when enough complaints have been lodged or a problem apparent. At the same time, a full-blown response to even a whiff of bed bugs is nevertheless consistent with Goldman, a firm with deep pockets and an ongoing public relations problem post financial crisis.

"I suppose this is one way the folks on Wall Street can relate to the pain and suffering found on Main Street," joked Suzanne McGee, author of "Chasing Goldman Sachs," a new book about Wall Street's woes. "Clearly, though, they have bigger and more crucial issues to confront, such as dealing with regulators and refurbishing their battered image. Still, if the bedbug problem is widespread and related to their workplace, that's just going to be one more blow to the employees' morale. The firm has enough image problems without this."

Cases on the Rise

Meanwhile, just across the river from Jersey City, bed bug infestations are on the rise in New York, according to

the city's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the New York Department of Housing, Preservation & Development. HPD violations relating to bed bug cases have risen sharply in Manhattan over the past decade. In 2004, there were 17 violations. Last year there were 717, although the advent of 311 system for renters to lodge complaints and an overall awareness of the problem could play a part in that spike, an HPD spokesman said. But bed bugs are thriving, and not just in the beds and couches of apartment residences.

"As busy as we have been dealing with bed bug problems in residences, we've been even busier going into offices," said Jeff Eisenberg, president of New York-based Pest Away Exterminators. Eisenberg said his company has no extermination contracts with Goldman.

"While it may not be as common for bed bug infestations to occur in the office as they are at home or in hotels, bed bugs can populate and thrive in any environment where they will have consistent access to blood meals," said Dan Bradbury, vice president of Viking Pest Control in Bridgewater, N.J. "If bed bugs are introduced into an office setting they will surely cause grief for anyone working there."

A 2007 outbreak of bed bugs in the [Fox News](#) newsroom prompted a civil lawsuit against the companies that own and manage the Manhattan building where Fox is headquartered. The case has not yet been resolved according to an attorney for the employee. The attorney for the building, Beacon Capital Partners, did not immediately return a call for comment. Former President Bill Clinton's Harlem offices also reportedly had a publicized bout with the tiny, wingless insects whose bites produce itchy welts.

The creatures are notoriously hard to eradicate because they can hide in tiny cracks and go up to a year without feeding. When they do find a host, they pierce the skin with two hollow feeding tubes, one of which injects its saliva, and the other for extracting its meal of blood. They feed for several minutes, then scurry back to hide. Most people don't get a reaction to the bite until hours or even days later.

Bed bugs hate the sunlight and are nocturnal creatures, but office buildings provide many opportunities for them to feed as well as places to hide.

Located across the Hudson River from Goldman's recently opened headquarters in lower Manhattan, the 42-story Goldman Sachs Tower at 30 Hudson Street in Jersey City is mainly home to Goldman's operational and technology support divisions, and also serves as a disaster recovery location, with a large trading floor that stays empty save for the occasional planning exercise.

Post-financial crisis, Goldman has been the focus of regulatory (and, according to several news sources, possible criminal) probes, not to mention a relentless backlash from foreign governments, union protestors and the media. Goldman hasn't gotten much sympathy over its role in the financial crisis, although a case of bed bugs might at least show that the rich aren't so different after all.

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New covers take aim at bedbugs

Maker's move to Maine could create 15 jobs

6/1/10 | [9 comments](#)

By [Eric Russell](#)

BDN Staff



BDN

Russell Manton. Image made on Thursday, May 13, 2010 at Manton's Morrill headquarters for Global Interiors. BANGOR DAILY NEWS PHOTO BY KEVIN BENNETT [Buy Photo](#)



MORRILL, Maine — The easiest way to get rid of pesky bedbugs, which have seen a resurgence in recent years, is to spray with toxic pesticides or use a concentrated heat source to kill them.

Unfortunately, those methods are usually expensive.

But there is another way: A thin, polypropylene material that covers mattresses or pillows, which keeps the insects from their food source — unwitting sleepers — can be had for about \$20.

As luck would have it, those covers are sold by a company in the coastal town of Morrill, just outside Belfast, and by year's end, the covers are expected to be manufactured there as well.

Russell Manton, president of Global Interiors, has been working with the hotel industry worldwide since 2005 to provide Save-A-Bed covers.

“We looked at the industry and saw potential, so we began looking for a way to meet that demand,” Manton said recently from his office in Morrill, which also is home to his other business, SureTech Lock LLC, which specializes in keyless lock systems. “Right now, our product is manufactured in China, but we’re moving operations here to Maine.”

The addition of a bedbug cover production facility, an investment of about \$150,000 for Manton, could add 15 jobs in the midcoast region.

“It will cost a little more to produce them here, but we really wanted to bring jobs back to Maine,” he said. “Certainly, it will be more convenient, and having that ‘Made in the U.S.A.’ tag seems to matter more and more.”

Bedbugs, while unpleasant to talk or think about, are still prevalent in certain areas and, because of their transient nature, they can show up

unannounced at any time. Bangor's public health office announced last month that the city has seen a rise in reports of bedbugs.

"I don't think the general public thinks of our region as an area that has bedbugs," Public Health Director Patty Hamilton said. "Historically, bedbugs have been more of an issue in the South, but in the last three years or so, I've had an increasing number of calls, even from people away from Bangor."

Ela Voluck with the National Pest Management Association said bedbug infestations have risen 70 percent nationwide since 2001.

"As travel season kicks in, people need to be especially aware of this hitchhiking pest, which can be brought home from hotels and motels," she said.

According to the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, bedbugs, or *Cimex lectularius*, are flat, wingless, red-brown, bloodsucking insects that can grow up to one-quarter inch in length and can live for up to one year.

Bedbugs hide in cracks and crevices of beds, furniture, floors and even walls. Unlike lice, bedbugs are not usually found on people or clothing. The bugs do not transmit disease, but their bites cause small, itchy red bumps on the skin's surface, although some people have no reaction to bites. The insects also are quite resilient, and they multiply prodigiously.

A survey conducted by the National Pest Management Association conducted in May 2007 confirmed that now 97 percent of the public does believe bedbugs exist. One of the major hurdles in dealing with bedbugs has been the public's resistance in believing they are real. NPMA believes the significant resurgence in bedbugs is related to increased international travel and more targeted pest management practices.

The Save-A-Bed covers, which at the moment are marketed to hotels and motels rather than the general public, offer an alternative to traditional pest control. Manton said market tests on his product found that they deter 95 percent of bedbugs.

Manton, who is originally from Scotland and travels all over the world on business, said he takes bedbug covers with him whether he stays in a five-star hotel or a run-down motel.

For information, visit the Global Interiors website: www.save-a-bed.com.

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