

# Field crops, pastures and tree plantations

**This fact sheet is for anyone who applies pesticides to field crops, fallow crop lands, pastures and tree plantations as part of agricultural operations.**

This includes field crops such as wheat, barley, maize, cotton, rice, oats, canola, sorghum, sugar cane, corn and soya beans, and both native and improved pastures. Plantation trees grown for oil (for example, tea trees), ornamental trees grown for landscaping (for example, palms or eucalyptus) and trees grown for charcoal production are also included.

This fact sheet provides guidance on how to comply with record-keeping rules as set out in the Pesticides Regulation 2017 (the Regulation). You should check if your industry quality assurance scheme has additional requirements.

## What pesticide treatments do I need to record?

If you apply pesticides to field crops, fallow crop land or trees in a plantation, then you **must** make a record whenever you use powered spray equipment. For example, you must make a record whenever:

- you apply pesticides using ground-driven powered spray equipment (for example, a ground rig, air blaster or tractor-mounted boom spray)
- you spray pesticides using hand-held and powered equipment (for example, you attach a hand-held applicator to the tanks on the back of your truck) – even if you only spot spray.

You do not need to make a record if you use non-powered (for example, human-powered) equipment such as a backpack and hand-held applicator for spot spraying in a small restricted area on or within a tree crop, provided the application occurs more than 20 metres from a property boundary.

Different record-keeping rules apply to horticultural crops (for example, fruits, vegetables, flowers, nuts or herbs) and fallow horticultural crop land. A separate fact sheet on record-keeping requirements relating to horticultural crops is available from the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

## What about spraying along boundary fences?

You must make a record if you plant field crops or plantation trees up to the boundary fence and apply pesticides to these crops using ground-driven or powered hand-held equipment. You do not need to make a record if you are using hand-held and hand-powered equipment to spot spray along your boundary fence.

## What is the domestic like use exemption?

The domestic like use exemption applies in addition to the exceptions outlined above. It allows you to use small quantities of domestic-type pesticides without making a record. Under the exemption you do not need to make a record if **all** the following conditions are met:

- the pesticide you are using is ordinarily used for domestic purposes (for example, home gardening), and
- it is widely available to the general public at retail outlets (for example, supermarkets or hardware stores), and
- you are applying the pesticide by hand or using a hand-held applicator (but it may be powered), and
- in the case of outdoor use, you use no more than 20 litres or 20 kilograms of 'ready-to-use' product or 5 litres or 5 kilograms of concentrated product, and/or

- in the case of indoor use, you use no more than 5 litres or 5 kilograms of 'ready-to-use' product or 1 litre or 1 kilogram of concentrated product.

## What information do I have to record?

To comply with the record-keeping rules set out in the Regulation you must record:

- the **full product name** of the pesticide applied (for example, 'BLOGGS Glyphosate 360 Herbicide', not just 'glyphosate')
- the **crop** you treated (for example, mature wheat or cotton – five-leaf stage) or the **situation** in which the pesticide was used (for example, fence-line weed control)
- the **rate** of application (this is on the product label) and **quantity** of the pesticide applied (for example, record the total amount of pesticide concentrate you used in a mix, the total amount of mix you made up, how much you used and the area (square metres or hectares) covered by the application)
- the property **address**, and a clear delineation of the **area** where the pesticide was released; you can mark this on a rough sketch or map of your property if this is easier
- the **date** of the pesticide application
- the **name, address and contact details** of the person who applied the pesticide. If you applied the pesticide yourself, you must write down your details. If you employed someone else to apply the pesticide, that person must record **their name** as well as **your** name, address and contact details as their employer. If the pesticide was applied by a contractor, the contractor must record their own name, address and contact details
- if you were **outdoors** and **sprayed** the pesticide through the air (for example, if you used a boom spray) you also need to record:
  - an estimate of the **wind speed and direction** at the start of the application and any significant wind changes during the application. If you have an anemometer, you could use it to determine wind speed and record wind speed in kilometres per hour. Or you can use the adapted Beaufort scale shown at the end of this fact sheet to help estimate the wind speed. Copies of

the Beaufort scale are also available from the [Bureau of Meteorology website](#)

- if **other weather conditions** are specified on the label as relevant to the proper use of that pesticide (such as temperature, humidity or rainfall) you will need to record a description of these conditions at the start of the application and any significant changes in the conditions during the application. For example, if the label says, 'do not apply when temperatures are above 30°C', then you should record the temperature at the start of application and any significant temperature changes during spraying.

## What if I use more than one pesticide in a job?

If you use more than one pesticide in a job, you do not need to create a separate record for every pesticide. You can make one record, but you must ensure it includes details on all the pesticides you used (that is, the full product name of each pesticide, the situation treated with each pesticide, rate and quantity and equipment used for each pesticide, a delineation of the area treated, and the date and time of each application).

## What form do I use?

You can use the EPA's sample record-keeping form, or make your record in any way you wish, provided each record includes the information required. If you already keep records for other purposes, such as quality assurance scheme purposes, you can simply add to that record any of the requirements listed above not already in that record. Information may be stored electronically.

## Who makes the record?

If you applied the pesticide, it is your responsibility to make the record. You can get someone else to write it down for you but it is up to you to make sure the record is made and that it is accurate. **The record must be in English.**

## When do I make the record?

If you need to make a record, you must do so within 48 hours of applying the pesticide.

## Who keeps the record and for how long?

If you are required to make a record under the Regulation, you must keep the record for three years.

- You need to keep the record if you are the owner or the person who manages or controls the property on which you or your employees applied the pesticide.
- You will need to give the record to your employer to keep if you are an employee.
- You need to keep the record if you are a contractor. However, if you are applying the

## Sample pesticide record

### Property

Name: Bright View Farm  
Address: RMB 507, Mountain View Road,  
Broadview, NSW 2999  
Phone: (02) 5437 8899

### Applicator contact details

Employees: Steven Smith (as above), Sally Peters (as above)

Table 1 Pesticide application record keeping.

Full product name	Date	Pest (optional)	Crop or place	Rate	Quantity (L)	Size	Areas treated	Applicator	Wind speed/direction (Weather conditions)
Bulldock Duo Insecticide	13 March 2014	Red-legged mite	Spraying on canola	200 ml in 50 L water per ha	600	12 ha	Paddocks A, D and F	Steve	Scale 1 / NNE
Astral 100EC insecticide/miticide	10 May 2014	Byrobia mite	Spraying on new canola planting	200 ml in 200 L water per ha	800	4 ha	Paddock B only	Sally	Scale 0, 24 degrees

**Note:** This is a sample record only. This information can be recorded in other ways, for example, incorporated into industry quality assurance scheme records.

pesticide to an agricultural property, you also need to provide a copy to the owner, occupier or manager of the property on which the pesticide was applied if they request it.

## Where can I get more information?

More information about record keeping is available from the EPA's Environment Line on 131 555 (NSW only) or on the [EPA website](#).

The Pesticide Regulation 2017 has full details of the record keeping requirements. A copy of the *Pesticide Act 1999* and the Regulation can be viewed on the [NSW Government legislation website](#).

## Beaufort scale

Table 2 This modified Beaufort scale is provided to help you determine the wind speed for pesticide record keeping purposes.

Beaufort or force number	Wind speed km/h	Description
0	Less than 1	Calm: Smoke will rise vertically.
1	1–5	Weather vane is inactive, rising smoke drifts.
2	6–11	Leaves rustle, can feel wind on your face, weather vane is inactive.
3	12–19	Leaves and twigs move around. Light-weight flags extend.
4	20–28	Moves thin branches, raises dust and paper.
5	29–38	Small trees move or sway.

**Note:** This table only includes the lower wind speed portion of the Beaufort scale. The full Beaufort scale also includes higher force numbers, which describe stronger wind speeds.

**Source:** [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au)

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NSW Environment Protection Authority  
Email: [info@epa.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@epa.nsw.gov.au)  
Website: [www.epa.nsw.gov.au](http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au)  
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