

IDAHO POTATO PULSE



Brought to you by the Idaho Potato Commission
Website: www.idahopotato.com

Government Affairs Report By Pat Kole

The Idaho Potato Industry was well represented at last week's NPC Public Policy Conference. Idaho delegates called on all four of our Congressional offices and spoke directly to all four of our elected officials. In addition, meetings were held with several USDA officials including those in charge of the GAP program, FAS and APHIS. Our meetings with USDA were highlighted by a luncheon talk from Undersecretary Edward Avalos who oversees these areas within USDA. We also visited EPA and met with FDA representatives. During these meetings, we were able to share with the regulators our concerns about their activities that could negatively impact our industry. We will follow up these meetings with written comments and additional contacts as needed.

Industry Relations Report By Todd Cornelison

NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems) Permits & NPC Spray Drift Comments

The Issue: up to this point in time, agriculture has been exempt from being required to have an NPDES permit to apply pesticides around water. Prior to this, these permits were only required for "Point Source" Polluters, such as factories and municipal water systems, these polluters can easily be traced to having a direct discharge into a water source.

What Changed: There are several lawsuits that have been brought by extreme advocacy groups that challenge the assumption that agriculture should be exempt from these permits. The lawsuits state that agriculture can pollute surrounding water through either run-off or chemical spray drift. One lawsuit has been ruled in favor of the advocacy groups and now agriculture finds its exemption in question. The following excerpt is from John Keeling of the NPC.

Growers should be aware that several deadlines are approaching that may have a direct impact on the regulation of spray drift as it pertains to pesticide applications. The comment period for spray drift, closes on March 5, 2010 and these comments are the critical next step in a longstanding struggle to have EPA provide manageable guidance to applicators and state regulatory personnel on how to manage the possible development of drift in a manner consistent with local conditions and the understanding that "zero drift" is not a workable regulatory concept. Of critical importance to efforts to regulate spray drift as well as the overall assessment of risk in all pesticide registration determinations is the movement to abandon the FIFRA "no unreasonable adverse effect" standard in favor of "may cause harm" standard. The attached background document from CropLife is well prepared and will give you a good understanding of just what is at play here.

What can I do?

Go to CropLife and become informed on the issue of spray drift.

<http://www.croplifeamerica.org/pesticide-issues/spray-drift>

Decide whether or not you want to sign the CropLife petition on spray drift.

<http://www.gopetition.com/online/33776.html>

Read NPC's comments by downloading the NPC comment letter.

http://www.nationalpotatocouncil.org/NPC/pressroom_newsflashes.cfm?cache=051003044305#409

Submit your own comments.

On the Federal Register Notice entitled "Draft Guidance for Pesticide Registrants on Pesticide Drift Labeling" [74 FR 57166, 11/4/2009, Docket No. EPA-HQ-OPP-2009-0628], requesting comment on three documents: (1) Pesticide

Registration Notice (PRN) Draft Pesticide Drift Labeling; (2) Draft Pesticide Drift Labeling Interpretation (Labeling Interpretation); and (3) Draft PRN Additional Information and Questions for Commenters. Go to www.regulations.gov and search for docket number EPA-HQ-OPP-2009-0628 to read the documents and submit a letter expressing your opinion and how this EPA action would affect you. **Deadline is March 5, 2010.**

Calendar

March

- 9 Idaho Nutrient Management Conference, Lincoln County Community Center, Shoshone, ID
Registration fee required, contact Amber Moore at: amberm@uidaho.edu
- 11 IPC Processor Nomination Meeting, IACI Offices, Boise, ID
- 11-12 USPB Annual Meeting, Denver, CO
- 16-17 IPC Commission Meeting, Eagle, ID
- 18 USDA Portal Training Workshop, Pre-Registration Required University Place Campus in Idaho Falls, ID
1:00-5:00 p.m., Room 204, Center for Higher Education Building (CHE)
- 18 IGSA PTI Committee Meeting, IGSA Office, Idaho Falls, ID
- 25 IGSA Convention Committee Meeting 2:00 p.m., IGSA Office, Idaho Falls, ID
- 25 IGSA Board Meeting 3:00 p.m., Idaho Falls, ID

April

- 6 United of Idaho Board Meeting, Idaho Falls, ID
- 13-14 IPC Commission Meeting, Eagle, ID
- 20-23 United Fresh Produce Association Convention, Las Vegas, NV

May

- 4 United of Idaho Board Meeting, Idaho Falls, ID
- 13-14 IPC Commission Meeting, Eagle, ID
- 15 Idaho Potato Commission Marathon, Boise, ID
- 22-25 National Restaurant Association Show, Chicago, IL

June

- 8 Idaho Eastern Oregon Potato Committee Meeting, Twin Falls, ID
- 9 IGSA Board Meeting, Twin Falls, ID
- 15-17 NPC Summer Meeting, Alamosa, CO
- 22-23 IPC Commission Meeting, Eagle, ID