

## Farm Operation – Use of Pesticides

*Proper pesticide use can protect farmer's health and the environment, and ensure food safety.*



1. Farmers must only purchase registered pesticides which are properly labeled and packaged.

2. Farmers must read the pesticide labels carefully, in particular noting specific warnings and precautions, and follow fully the directions provided thereon.

3. As a rule of thumb, pesticides should be applied in the minimum quantity required for pest control.

4. Farmers should wear appropriate personal protective equipment as specified on the pesticide label (e.g. overalls, rubber gloves, boots, face masks, goggles etc.) when mixing and applying pesticides. The application equipment should be maintained properly, and checked regularly for leaks, malfunctions and calibration accuracy.

5. Pesticides should not be applied when winds are strong to avoid particle drift. Runoff should be avoided by not applying pesticides during rainy weather, and not irrigating immediately after pesticide application. Farmers should set up buffer zones around water sources in their farm to prevent contamination of water due to pesticide drift and runoff.



### About “GAP- CROP”

The GAP-CROP provides guidelines on local sustainable production of safe, healthy vegetables and fruits. It focuses on reducing the risk of chemical contamination (e.g. by pesticide and heavy metal) at farm level. This article is the eighth of a series of 12 Codes of Practice (COP) making up the GAP-CROP. Farmers may voluntarily follow this COP, identify potential problems in their farms, take appropriate control/mitigation measures, and monitor the effectiveness of such measures.







6. After applying pesticides, farmers should remove their clothes and wash them; then thoroughly wash hands, face, and body. Farmers should never eat, drink or smoke while applying pesticides or before cleaning up.

7. Pesticides should be stored in their original containers kept tightly closed in a cool, well-ventilated, protected location away from food/drinks, seed storage or product packing areas and water sources to prevent contamination from spill, leaching, runoff or wind drift.

8. Insecticides should be stored away from herbicides to prevent use mix-up, contamination and possible plant damage.



9. Pesticide containers should not be recycled or re-used for other usage. Obsolete or unwanted pesticides and containers must be disposed of in accordance with manufacturer's instructions provided on the pesticide label, or as governed by the Waste Disposal Ordinance.

10. Farmers should keep records on the purchase, and disposal of pesticides used in their farms. There should be an updated stock inventory and a complete diary of applications: crop, date of planting, pests, weather conditions, pesticide(s) used, date of application and amounts.

11. Farmers must strictly adhere to the withholding period or pre-harvest interval specified on the pesticide label to avoid harvested crops tainted with pesticide residue. Farmers should wait for at least two weeks before harvesting their crops after the last pesticide application if no withholding period is specified on the pesticide label.



**Next COP:**  
Farm Operation – Harvesting

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