



# Teaching Consumers to Use Pesticides Safely

## A MISSION OF LAND-GRANT UNIVERSITY PESTICIDE SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Pesticide Safety Education Programs (PSEPs) at Land Grant Universities educate individuals who apply or supervise the use of pesticides as part of their farm, commercial business, or employment. *PSEPs also have a critical role in educating the general public on the safe use of conventional, organic, antimicrobial and other pesticides in and around homes, on landscapes, gardens, and pets, and near public, business and private places.*

Consumers applying pesticides are faced with a wide range of topics related to the safe use of pesticides—for example, personal and family health, protection of pets and other non-target species, understanding the label and other pesticide laws, equipment calibration, storage, handling, waste disposal, and prevention of off-site movement. PSEPs teach these and other core principles of safe use so consumers can benefit from the pesticide products they choose to use while simultaneously protecting human health, non-target organisms, and the environment.

The first priority of PSEP consumer education is to teach safe and effective use of pesticides—the chemical component of IPM—in and around homes, on landscapes, gardens, and pets, and near public places. Safe use is taught within the framework of IPM—prevention, sanitation, accurate pest identification, monitoring, pest thresholds and a careful assessment of all appropriate control methods (biological, chemical, cultural, etc.) When the selected control methods involve pesticides—conventional, organic, antimicrobial, etc.—a strong understanding of safe use and handling practices is paramount, and PSEPs deliver this information in diverse ways, to homeowners, retailers, Master Gardeners, food safety advisors, medical professionals, public schools, communities and more.

### PESTICIDE SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAMS:

- **Have a significant role in train-the-trainer programs** utilizing Master Gardeners and County Agents who pass along their training to local constituents;
- **Provide support to others who have opportunities to promote safe pesticide use by the general public:** Garden Center Retailers, Health Professionals, Consumer Educators specializing in IPM in or around schools or homes, etc.;
- **Educate consumers at public events** such as County Fairs, Farm Safety Days, Plant Health Clinics, Farmers Markets, Retailer Workshops, Earth Days, and Library Reading Programs;
- **Support pesticide safety education** for school Administrators, Teachers, Staff, Parents, and Students;
- **Provide input into policy decisions and answer questions** from Trade, Consumer and Property Associations; Not-for-Profits; Local, State and Federal Governments; and Advisory Committees for Parks, Day Care Centers, etc.;
- **Create or collaborate on pesticide safety education** using Workshops, Mobile Clinics, Presentations, Training Manuals, Factsheets, Field Days, Videos, Lessons, Websites, Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, Ask-the-Expert, Blogs, and Radio; and
- **Provide free, on-demand website access to pesticide safety education resources.** <http://psep.us/PSEP>