

**Effective Land Grant University Pesticide Safety Education Programs:
Mission, Need, Requirements, Target Audiences, Goals, and Key Activities***

*National Stakeholder Team for Pesticide Safety Education Program Funding
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Mission

To protect human health and the environment by educating all appropriate audiences on the safe and legal handling of pesticides from purchase to use and/or disposal.

Need

- It is imperative that a strong, sustainable university extension Pesticide Safety Education Program (PSEP) be in place to provide unbiased, science-based, effective training to:
 - almost one million pesticide applicators certified as private (e.g., farmers) and commercial (e.g., for-hire workforce, public employees),
 - certified technicians, consultants, and pesticide dealers,
 - many more non-certified users (e.g., agricultural handlers, Master Gardeners, home users), and
 - the expanded network of pesticide safety advocates in industry and government.
- Training services that focus on pesticide laws and regulations, label comprehension, pesticide exposure, risk mitigation, personal protective equipment, pest control basics, product formulations, mixing/application principles, environmental stewardship, and protecting human health are necessary for the safe and legal use of these products.

Federal, State, and Indian Country Regulatory Requirements*

- Certification and recertification (continuing education) of private and commercial applicators
- Certification and recertification for other pesticide-related professionals, *including but not limited to service technicians, dealers, agricultural handlers, consultants, and supervisors*

Target Audiences

- Private business owners and employees *working in areas such as agriculture, forestry, aquatic, urban landscapes, food-handling establishments, and institutions, or conducting residential pest management activities*
- Public employees *working in/on schools, parks, government lands, rights of way, and waterways, and those protecting human health (e.g., mosquitoes)*
- The general public *who are protecting their homes, landscapes, gardens, pets, and personal health.*
- University, state, tribal, and not-for-profit trainers *who in-turn educate others in the safe and legal handling of pesticides*

Goals

- Minimize and manage the risks associated with the legal use of pesticides to reduce impacts caused by a wide range of pest species in various settings, including but not limited to:
 - Crops, landscapes, rights-of way, waterways, school grounds, parks:
 - *manage weeds, insects, plant pathogens, nematodes, rodents, birds, and wildlife*
 - Neighborhoods, aquatic sites, food establishments, institutions:
 - *manage human disease organisms and their vectors (insects, rodents, and ticks)*
 - Residences, businesses, public buildings, including the structure itself:
 - *manage wood-destroying organisms, bed bugs, cockroaches, fleas and rodents*
- Impart knowledge and enhance skills, such as those listed below, to those responsible for using pesticides legally, properly, and safely:
 - Complying with regulations (state, federal, tribal) and enforcement
 - Reading, understanding, and following the pesticide label
 - Selecting, storing, mixing, handling, applying, and disposing of pesticides (and their containers)
 - Recognizing health concerns associated with pesticide exposure
 - Minimizing exposure through Personal Protective Equipment and strategies to protect applicators, workers, bystanders
 - Protecting food and feed supplies, water quality, pollinators, endangered species, etc.
 - Using methods and tools to minimize pesticide drift, volatility, runoff, and leaching
 - Preventing resistance to herbicides, insecticides, fungicides and rodenticides
 - Mixing and diluting pesticides, and calibrating application equipment
 - Recognizing the importance of proper pest identification.

Key Activities Provided by PSEPs

- Certification and recertification training for certified applicators
 - Clinics, hands-on workshops, and classes, including in-person and online
- Master Gardener training classes, county fairs, and farm shows
- Print and electronic resources
 - Certification study manuals and other training manuals
 - Fact sheets, web-based resources, presentations, and videos
 - County Agent and Master Gardener training resources
 - *Note:* The network of pesticide safety educators shares resources with other programs and some national materials have been produced to reduce the efforts for producing similar works.

* The exact target audiences and activities of each Land Grant University Pesticide Safety Education Program vary.