



**For Immediate Release**

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**Team of Stakeholders Join to Promote Funding for Pesticide Safety Education Program**

LAWRENCE, Kansas – October 22, 2012 – Today the Weed Science Society of America announced it is joining more than 30 organizations from the scientific community, government, education and industry in a commitment to launch a National Stakeholder Team for Pesticide Safety Education Program Funding.

The U.S. Pesticide Safety Education Program (PSEP) is the nation's primary program for pesticide applicator education.

"There is nothing more vital to the safety of rural and urban pesticide applicators, farm workers, the general public and the environment than comprehensive education on all aspects of pesticide handling and use," says Lee Van Wychen, Ph.D., science policy director of the Weed Science Society of America. "We must ensure the program's effectiveness and longevity with appropriate support by stakeholders at both the state and national level."

Objectives of the diverse new group include: establishing a permanent source of federal funding for PSEP in every state and territory; determining the potential for additional support through state and territory pesticide product registration fees, enforcement fines and more; exploring ways for stakeholders to provide unrestricted gifts, grants and endowments to support PSEP; and promoting awareness of PSEP and the importance of program funding.

Members of the stakeholder initiative to date include:

**Government**

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture
- Montana Department of Agriculture
- North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

- Office of the Indiana State Chemist
- Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

#### **Associations**

- Agricultural Retailers Association
- American Association of Pesticide Safety Educators
- American Farm Bureau Federation
- American Mosquito Control Association
- Association of American Pesticide Control Officials
- Association of Structural Pest Control Regulatory Officials
- CropLife America
- Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association
- National Agricultural Aviation Association
- National Association of County Agricultural Agents
- National Corn Growers Association
- National Pest Management Association
- Professional Landcare Network, Inc.
- Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment

#### **Pesticide Registrants**

- BASF Corporation
- Bayer CropScience
- Dow AgroSciences
- DuPont Crop Protection
- Monsanto
- Syngenta

#### **Pest Management Societies**

- Entomological Society of America
- Weed Science Society of America

#### **Pesticide Safety Education Programs**

- Montana State University
- North Dakota State University
- Texas A&M University
- Washington State University

The team's first meeting will be a teleconference scheduled for 2:30 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, October 31.

For more information or to join the National Stakeholder Team for Pesticide Safety Education Program Funding, contact one of the team co-leaders: Liza Fleeson, program manager for the Office of Pesticide Services, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

([liza.fleeson@vdacs.virginia.gov](mailto:liza.fleeson@vdacs.virginia.gov)); or Carol Somody, senior stewardship manager at Syngenta ([carol.somody@syngenta.com](mailto:carol.somody@syngenta.com)). A 2011 WSSA technical paper providing detailed information on the Pesticide Safety Education Program is available on the [WSSA website](#).

### **About the Weed Science Society of America**

The Weed Science Society of America, a nonprofit scientific society, was founded in 1956 to encourage and promote the development of knowledge concerning weeds and their impact on the environment. The Weed Science Society of America promotes research, education and extension outreach activities related to weeds, provides science-based information to the public and policy makers, fosters awareness of weeds and their impact on managed and natural ecosystems, and promotes cooperation among weed science organizations across the nation and around the world. For more information, visit [www.wssa.net](http://www.wssa.net).