

Region 6 SFIREG Report submitted by Leslie Smith, Texas Department of Agriculture

On October 11-12, 2017, Region 6 met in Dallas, Texas for the Region 6 EPA/States/Tribal/CES Fall meeting. A Pre-SFIREG session was held in conjunction with this meeting. Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, the Cherokee Nation, and the Eight Northern Indian Pueblo Council were represented at the October meeting. The topics of concern that Region 6 requested to be presented at the December 2017 SFIREG meeting are below.

Dicamba

Arkansas continued to be concerned about the number of dicamba complaints they received during the 2017 growing season. They are reviewing complaint investigation reports. Arkansas Extension and Researchers are continuing with dicamba studies and the effects on soybeans and other broadleaf plants. The Arkansas State Plant Board is also reviewing thousands of comments received on the proposal to limit the dates of dicamba applications in 2018.

Discussion led to the requirements that will need to be met when the new edited labels for over the top dicamba products are printed and the challenges of insuring that applicators are all trained or go through this training prior to the 2018 application season.

Imports

Region 6 receives a large portion of all the US pesticide imports. The new electronic system, ACE, is in place for Notices of Arrival.

- There is concern that EPA Region 6 is no longer able to review pesticide labels before they arrive to see if there will be issues with the products and they will not be able to warn the state of possible mislabeling.
- The ACE program will only check applications for completeness, not accuracy. Not checking these products at the port will allow more misbranded and unregistered pesticides to enter the country. By the time the noncompliant pesticides would be discovered they will have already been distributed all across the country.

CPARD

- What is the status?

Budgets for grants

- Many details are required on proposed annual budgets. While states, tribes and CES may know of some events and travel, not all events are known. Questions and requests for more details are required even though only estimates are available a year or more in advance. It would be easier to include more details when requesting reimbursements.
- Minor changes in the amount to be granted require new SF-424A and budget details. This takes a great deal of time to prepare and submit. Sometimes there are multiple changes within a year and not only when there are continuing resolutions.
- If the grant amount will change, the states/tribes need to be notified as soon as possible to make necessary spending adjustments.

Inspector credentials

- States are still having issues receiving inspector credentials, both new and renewal. There is a requirement for certificates of completed training from years ago for inspectors renewing credentials. If they are renewing, there should already be a record of the previous training. Only continuing education credits received should be required to be submitted.

- Region 6 hosts an inspector training each year. The course should be able to count toward the required training for credentials. The requirements for training to be approved for credentialing purposes take too long for most courses to be approved in time.

Enforcement results

- States/Tribes investigate/inspect businesses and pesticide applicators in routine and for cause reasons. If for EPA referral, the report is returned to EPA for enforcement. If the inspector finds possible violations of FIFRA that are not state jurisdiction, those reports are also sent to EPA for enforcement. In many cases, the state is not notified if any or what enforcement action was taken by EPA. The states would like to know the results.