

# State FIFRA Issues Research and Evaluation Group (SFIREG) Report

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*December 6-7, 2021*

The Region 6 fall pre-SFIREG meeting was held by teleconference via Microsoft Teams on October 19-21, 2021. All the states in the region (OK, AR, LA, TX, NM) as well as the Eight Northern Pueblos Indian Council and the Cherokee Nation participated. Also joining the call we welcomed the Choctaw Nation and the Pawnee Nation. Due to the virtual format and participants schedules the meeting took place over three days, meeting for a couple of hours each day.

## **State Updates:**

Arkansas-Working through complaints (360 dicamba), Working in office, business as normal, Addressing C&T comments.

Louisiana-No dicamba complaints, Kim Brown has taken the PSEP Coordinator position in Tennessee, Addressing C&T comments, Held 5 pesticide disposals/collections collecting over 344,000 lbs.

New Mexico-No dicamba concerns, Trying to fill vacant positions, Addressing C&T comments, Planning fall pesticide disposals.

Oklahoma-Applicator testing back to full capacity, Still teleworking, Addressing C&T comments, 3 dicamba complaints all other complaints on normal pace, Held 2 pesticide disposals collecting over 50,000 lbs.

Texas-6 dicamba complaints all other complaints on normal pace, Targeting marketplace inspections looking for Covid-19 claims, Addressing C&T comments.

ENPIC-Teleworking, Cannot go onto reservations due to Covid-19 regulations.

## Region 6 Discussions to Specific SFIREG Topics

### 1. **COVID 19:**

Region 6 states are still moving forward despite the challenges of the pandemic. Some states are still teleworking while some are back to the office as normal. Most states are performing field work as normal while some are still conducting offsite inspections. Oklahoma and Texas have gone back to full capacity at testing facilities. All states shared that they have seen a decline in the number of Covid claims and issues related to registration.

2. **Dicamba:**

Nothing new to report since the last meeting. Region 6 states for the most part have seen no issues with the exception of Arkansas. Oklahoma and Texas had 9 dicamba complaints combined with Oklahoma reporting 3 and Texas reporting 6. New Mexico and Louisiana both stated that they did not receive any dicamba complaints. Arkansas reported 360 complaints.

In regards to the reregistration, the region has an issue with the cut off dates. A large majority of the soybeans in Oklahoma are double crop beans meaning most of the beans are planted mid-June thus greatly reducing the ability to utilize this technology.

Complaints dealing with dicamba in all Region 6 states have been few with the exception of Arkansas. All states reported that dicamba training numbers have declined. The cut off dates on the label did prohibit many SW Oklahoma and N Texas producers from being able to utilize this technology. Oklahoma and N Texas were affected by this greatly this year due to wet and unseasonably cool temperatures at normal planting time.

Texas has submitted a 24(c) to extend the cutoff by 30 days and allow applications from sun up to sun down. This was submitted April 1<sup>st</sup> and was not granted.

3. **Revised C&T Plans:**

There are no issues concerning the revised plans. All Region 6 states have received comments from the Region and HQ. The States were pleased with the comments, most all the comments were simply seeking clarification and minor edits. There was a concern from all the states in regards to the requested turnaround time given to address the comments. Most States were given a short amount of time to address the comments and return to the Region, these comments were received right when end of year reports were trying to be completed and some renewals taking place.

All the Region 6 states agree that our regional EPA staff was a tremendous help in preparing these plans and addressing comments. Our regional staff was very responsive to questions and were very helpful in allowing us to being able to submit a feasible plan on time.

4. **Chlorpyrifos:**

Several states have received calls from applicators and dealers asking how to deal with existing stocks. This is a great concern for those that have inventory. States would like an updated guidance or any information on how to handle these existing stocks.

5. **Paraquat:**

Region 6 states did not express any concerns or issues with Paraquat. All states report that they do not get many calls or questions. Region 6 feels that the training and requirement are appropriate.

**Other topics discussed:**

*Communication*

States feel there is a breakdown or lack of communication more so with HQ rather than the region. Some states feel notifications for dockets could be improved. Also states feel there could be better communication between other agencies, DEQ and Wildlife.

*EPA Response*

Some states are having problems getting responses from the region. This was a tough year for everyone and all the programs, however some states would lean on the Region and HQ for guidance or support and never receive any kind of response. This issue was more directed towards HQ than the region.