

SFIREG Pesticide Operations and Management (POM) Working Committee Answers to Questions (May 19, 2025)– Web Distributed Label Concerns and Questions from SFIREG Regional reports (Dec 9, 2024) located on AAPCO website [SFIREG – Association of American Pesticide Control Officials](#)

- Question from PRE-SFIREG Report: EPA recently registered a product with a portion of the label in a digital accessible format. Here is the link to that product:
https://www3.epa.gov/pesticides/chem_search/ppls/007969-00336-20240830.pdf
- Do SLAs in the Region have any experience with digital labeling such as this?
- Are there any questions or issues that need to be discussed regarding this form of labeling?

POM comments: This example was NOT digital labeling; it is an example of Web-distributed labeling.

- Digital labeling - Information in the label is presented as data, can be tagged and used in different ways
- Web-distributed labeling -Mechanism to allow users to access a legally valid version of labeling via the internet (e.g., QR-code or website on the labeling) – see PRN 2014-1

Overall Concerns (From Regional Reports)

- Limited to no access to internet, electronic devices, cell data
- Enforcement
 - What information is in applicator's possession at time of application?
 - What requirements are there for applicators to review information available through QR code?
- Website continuity, updates and notification to states.

POM comments: Web-Distributed Labeling

- The intent is to make legally valid labeling available to users electronically and it is voluntary. There is a description and FAQs available at [Web-distributed Labeling for Pesticides | US EPA](#)
- See [Pesticide Registration Notice 2014-1](#)
 - Guidance on making legally valid labeling available through the internet
 - Suggested text for container label and labeling accessed through website
 - Describes link between container label and labeling accessed through website
- Web-distributed labeling enforcement will rely on current enforcement infrastructure
- Registrants are responsible for ensuring product labeling accurately reflects labeling accepted by EPA; would be responsible for website labeling content
 - If the website host is someone other than the registrant, that entity could also be held accountable as the registrant's agent
- Users are responsible for complying with product labeling
 - They have a choice between full container labeling or full web-distributed labeling, users cannot pick and choose between the two
 - If web-distributed labeling is chosen, the label accessed would have WDL statement, header/footer with page numbers, website and date accessed
 - Users responsible for complying with relevant federal/state recordkeeping for the pesticide being used

- NOT all websites/QR codes on container labels are web-distributed labeling (e.g. QR codes for Bilingual labeling)
 - All websites referenced on the labeling are considered part of the labeling, but they're not a stand-alone version of the labeling that users can rely on
 - Making legally valid labeling accessible via the internet requires a link between the container label and the web-distributed labeling

Concerns by EPA Regional Reports (Answers in bold)

- **R1:** not all growers use or have access to electronic devices; concern with confusion
Growers can use the container label; they are not required to use the WDL
- **R2:** Questions did come up regarding compliance with the label for use inspections and how to determine which label was used
The user would provide which label they used either container or web-distributed.
- **R3:** main question and concern is connectivity issues - Registering products with labels that have portions that are only available in a digital format leaves some applicators without access to label information
Applicators can use the container label; they are not required to use the WDL.
- **R7:** enforcement concerns / needing to understand what information is in the applicator's possession at the time of an application; what requirements are there for applicators to review information available on the QR code; website continuity, updates and notification to states.
See POM comments: Web-Distributed Labeling on page 1
- **R8:** What happens if the label changes and upon an inspection/enforcement it is not the one that was approved, but a version that was distributed or even briefly available, but later updated?
 - Jolynn with CO has seen and was shown QR codes and labels from some 25B and some claims of uses, efficacies, etc... on their labels are outlandish and of concern and some are not current or the QR code was going to an incorrect version of their label.
See POM comments: Web-Distributed Labeling on page 1
- **R10:** lack of cell service or easily accessible internet
 - ODA – The container label for Nealta Miticide on file with ODA (approved 5/14/2024) does not have a QR code.
 - Past experience with QR code on label that linked to entire EPA label on disinfectant product. we were surprised that there was an option to use a QR code, but that there were no restrictions or limitations on how the QR code could be used or what information could appear on the QR code-linked site. This product never ended up being registered. For more information,

see 2021 Basecamp thread “QR Code on Virus Guard (EPA Reg. No. 85134-1-97764)” and the current EPA label for 85134-1, just above the Storage and Disposal on PDF p. 9.

See POM comments: Web-Distributed Labeling on page 1

Overall Questions

- Could QR codes be a potential path for bilingual labeling? QR codes are allowed for bilingual labeling via non-notification.

Yes, QR codes are allowed for bilingual labeling via non-notification, see <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-labels/bilingual-labeling-questions-answers>

This is NOT web-distributed labeling

- Can digital labels be used to hone in for specific uses, crops, etc, and reduce/remove guess work or uncertainty by applicators/users?

The example was web distributed labeling. If WDL is used it should explain what the link goes to, which is on the EPA stamped approved label and the container label.

- what is a state’s responsibility to review QR code information during a state’s registration review process?

That is up to the individual state, however it should not change the state review process.

- what does the label on the product look like compared to the label submitted to a state for review?
 - Approved labels in some states did not include the QR code

The registrant chose to not use the QR code/web-distributed labeling even though it was on the EPA SAL

The container label should have the WDL statement, released for shipment date, unique identifier (can be a QR code).

- Are there plans for time stamped technology? and/or how to regulate the possibility for multiple label versions based on timing and QR codes? Cite requirement

See POM comments: Web-Distributed Labeling on page 1

- How will EPA address accessibility issues?

Users can choose to use the container label. EPA suggested if the user wanted to use the WDL, they could review and print out or download prior to making application.

- See WA specific questions listed below (R10)

- Request for EPA: it would have been helpful if there were Note(s) to Reviewer on the EPA label imposing parameters on what must at least be on the container label vs. the QR code-linked site, if there are any restrictions on what can't appear on the site without also appearing on the label, anything on how the information is to be presented, etc.

This comment was relayed to EPA

Questions by EPA Regional Reports

- **R5:** Could QR codes be a potential path for bilingual labeling? Can digital labels be used to hone in for specific uses, crops, etc, and reduce/remove guess work or uncertainty by applicators/users?

Yes, QR codes are allowed for bilingual labeling, see

<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-labels/bilingual-labeling-questions-answers>

Digital labeling is another topic

- **R7:** what is a state's responsibility to review QR code information during a state's registration review process; what does the label on the product look like compared to the label submitted to a state for review;
 - Several states had reviewed the status of the product in their respective states and were able to confirm product registration, but the approved labels did not include the QR code

The registrant chose to not use the QR code/web-distributed labeling even though it was on the EPA SAL. Reviewing the QR code/web-distributed labeling, is up to the individual state, however it should not change the state review process

If the container label included web-distributed labeling it should have the WDL statement, released for shipment date , unique identifier (can be a QR code).

- **R8:** Are there plans or are they going to be, or could be, or should be time stamped and/or how to regulate/navigate the possibility for multiple label versions based on timing and QR codes alongside other technology issues that can be imagined/have been stated/experienced

If web-distributed labeling is chosen, the label accessed would have WDL statement, Header/footer with page numbers, website and date accessed

- **R10:**
 - What are EPA's current criteria and expectations for WDL?
 - a. Does WDL bypass state review and approval of product labels?

No, State review processes would still apply

- b. WDL that requires consistency with the most recent master label, has potential to invalidate or supersede market/container labels in channels of trade. This has implications for both registration and enforcement.

- c. Will EPA require submission of amended labels via notification? If not, how are SLAs expected to confirm that WDL has been added to the master label? Notification is required for everything except BL

The WDL would not supersede the EPA approval process

- Specific questions/concerns for the example Nealta product label:
 - a. Nealta master label provided as an example omits instructions specified in PRN 2014-1 on how to access WDL, including the unique identifier, the release for shipment date (or placeholder text), the format of that information, and how to locate that information on the label. Should SLAs expect to see those items on the market label? Will master labels include those items going forward?

EPA has offered to work with interested companies before submission of request to amend labeling. EPA plans to alert states when master labels are stamped.

- b. The Nealta master label further states that the WDL is approved by US EPA and state lead agencies, which may falsely or prematurely imply approval of rendered output at the state level.

This comment was relayed to EPA

- What WDL guidance should SLAs refer to and does it differ from previously available references (e.g., PRN 2014-1, 2017 EPA presentation to AAPCO, EPA WDL website)?

SLAs can refer to:

[PRN 2014-1 Web-Distributed Labeling for Pesticide Products | US EPA](#)

[Web-distributed Labeling for Pesticides | US EPA](#)

EPA's Web-distributed labeling presentation at the Spring 2025 JWC

<https://aapco.org/2015/07/29/working-committees/>

- For states that do not review and approve EPA master labels for registration purposes, WDL must be available for the product/label registered in the state (which may differ from the master label).
- What are the expectations for adoption of WDL?
 - a. Is it expected to be only for certain types of products, or will it eventually apply to all products?

Web-distributed labeling is voluntarily for registrants

- b. What is the anticipated timeline for adoption? Does EPA anticipate approving many WDL labels in the near future?

EPA has one product in house now that they are reviewing with WDL

- c. Is Nealta the first WDL label that EPA has approved?

Yes, it is the first WDL EPA SAL

- Current guidance implies that WDL is expected to match the current EPA master label, which may or may not correspond with actual distributed product labels. How will this be addressed?
 - a. If a newer master label exists, does that invalidate current container labeling if the container label has WDL access? This would seem to conflict with guidance that allows the user to choose to follow any one complete label version in case of conflict.

It does not invalidate the current container label that is on the container.

- b. What constitutes a unique identifier on a product label (NOT the QR code) and what label changes would require a new unique identifier for a product label?

See [PRN 2014-1 Web-Distributed Labeling for Pesticide Products | US EPA](#)

- c. If multiple label versions with different unique identifiers are in the marketplace, will the registrant be required to maintain multiple WDL versions to match, or will all unique IDs direct users ONLY to the most recent master label version?

Registrants have the option to do either - direct users to the most recent SAL or maintain multiple WDL versions to match the EPA SAL versions

- What does EPA consider 'state approval' (in the context of WDL) and how should states address concerns with ABNs, sublabels, and actual market labels?
 - a. Is the WDL accessed required to be consistent with the most current EPA master label OR the most current approved state/market label? - These may not be the same! For example, subsets of use sites on disinfectant labels usually differ by distributor. For another example, Washington did not accept a new label that included incorrect application rates for certain crops, but did accept a sublabel for one crop.

The WDL accessed is required to match the approved container version or be a newer version of it (at the registrant's discretion).

EPA suggests discussing this issue when it comes up.

- How does WDL address discrepancies between market and master labels, including allowable differences such as adjusted use rates (within an approved range), target pests (removed not added), crops/use sites (removed not added)?

Same as the current system for paper-based labeling

See POM comments: Web-Distributed Labeling on page 1

- There is considerable potential for label version mismatches.
 - a. Master label-driven WDL has inherent potential conflicts with many container labels from Day 1. For example: i. ABNs ii. Sublabels iii. Distributor labels
 - b. Do other states formally review revised labels for acceptance prior to allowing distribution and use?
 - i. If yes, what will constitute 'state approval' of a revised label in the context of WDL?
 - ii. What are the concerns around lag time in submission and approval of revised labels? Not all states receive or approve the same version of a revised label at the same time, and not all states formally approve revised labels.
 - 1. Example: WA did not accept a revised label that omitted regional restrictions, but did allow continued distribution under a previously accepted label version.
 - c. For states with additional restrictions, unreviewed WDL may bypass state restrictions and requirements including state restricted use pesticides, state use restricted pesticides, dealer licensing, recordkeeping, etc.
 - i. If a product label requires retention of the label for records and state law does NOT require label retention, which is enforceable by the state?

See POM comments: Web-Distributed Labeling on page 1

- REQUEST: In this situation (QR linked to entire EPA Label), it would have been helpful if there were Note(s) to Reviewer on the EPA label imposing parameters on what must at least be on the container label vs. the QR code-linked site, if there are any restrictions on what can't appear on the site without also appearing on the label, anything on how the information is to be presented, etc. Otherwise, if the EPA label just permits a QR code generally, it is hard for us to push back on a registration application if we have concerns with what appears on the QR code-linked site.

This comment was relayed to EPA

See the SAL, which includes notes to the PM:

https://www3.epa.gov/pesticides/chem_search/ppls/007969-00336-20240830.pdf

- How will EPA address accessibility issues. If a Spanish speaking employee needs access to a label, how are they able to be WPS compliant if they do not have internet access?

Users can choose to use the container label. EPA suggested if the user wanted to use the WDL, they could review and print out or download prior to making application.