

NCDA&CS statement regarding the necessity of PPE for agricultural operations

The application of pesticides is an essential and necessary step in crop production. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has very specific requirements for PPE on pesticide labeling. Many of the products critically needed in agricultural production have these requirements for specific PPE. However, the necessary PPE has been difficult to acquire in the agricultural community during this crisis by virtue of supplies having to be diverted to the health care sector and other areas. EPA has made it clear that these specific PPE requirements will not be waived, even in light of these supply challenges, as they are there to protect human health. The label requirements for mandatory PPE are there to mitigate risks to human health and protect these workers who are essential in our crop production. Unless this PPE is made available to producers, they will lose vital production tools which could further jeopardize their agricultural enterprises and result in food shortages and increasing food insecurities throughout the nation.

“The Department of Homeland Security’s identification of critical infrastructure, identifies the production and supply of food and agriculture as one of 16 critical infrastructure areas providing vital service to the nation,” said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. “As such, the PPEs required in order for these operations to function is of utmost importance in this time in which our food supply is so vital.”

The DHS link follows: <https://www.cisa.gov/identifying-critical-infrastructure-during-covid-19>