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# Use of agricultural and veterinary chemicals

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The use of chemicals is regulated to minimise risks to health, the environment and trade.

Agricultural and veterinary chemical products must be used responsibly and safely.

In general, you must:

- use registered agricultural and veterinary chemical products
- follow instructions on the product label.

Appropriately choosing and using chemicals protects against:

- loss of markets due to chemical residues in produce
- health and safety impacts
- resistance in target pests
- environmental impacts.

This guide includes information to help you use agricultural and veterinary chemicals safely.

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## Choosing the right chemicals

Before using chemicals, ask yourself:

- Have you identified the insect, weed or disease?
- Is chemical control necessary? Are there other methods of control?
- What's nearby? Are there neighbouring crops, bodies of water, or sensitive areas such as schools?
- What are your intended markets for the produce? Are there additional restrictions on chemicals that can be used?

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) [PubCRIS database](#) lets you search for information about registered agvet chemical products. This database includes the product name, registering company, active constituents, product category, and host and pest information. Once you find a product in PUBCRIS, in most cases you will also be able to see a copy of the product's label.

Other resources to help you identify pests or diseases include private consultants, veterinarians, the Queensland Government's Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) grower help desk (GrowHelp) or specialists located at DAFF research stations.

## Off-label permits

You can search for information on minor use permits and emergency use permits on the [APVMA permits database](#).

If there are no products registered or permitted to control the pest or disease in a particular situation, you can [apply for a permit from the APVMA](#).

## Related links

- [Contact our Customer Service Centre](#).
- Find out more about [APVMA](#).
- Learn about [using chemicals in aquaculture](#).

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# Using chemicals safely and effectively

When registering chemicals, the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) evaluates the effectiveness of the chemical and the impacts to human health, crops, animals and the environment.

Where there are increased risks to human health, the environment and trade, additional controls are applied through restrictions on how and where products can be used.

Certain chemical products have been declared [restricted chemical products \(RCPs\)](#) because of the special training and other occupational safety requirements needed for handling or using these chemicals.

To use chemicals responsibly, you must follow the instructions on the registered product label or permit issued by APVMA. You can also get advice from the following resources:

- [Guidelines to help you safely and effectively use agricultural and veterinary chemicals](#)
- [Agricultural chemical users' manual](#)
- [Safe use, storage and disposal of rural chemicals](#).

## Minimising off-target spray drift

Agricultural chemicals may become airborne and drift outside the intended area when sprayed - this should be

avoided. Spray drift can damage plants, environment, property and the health of animals and people.

Learn more about [minimising the impacts of spray drift](#) and [reporting chemical spray drift](#).

APVMA also has information on [assessing and managing spray drift](#).

## Herbicide application techniques

Depending on the species you're trying to control, and other factors, some techniques for applying herbicides to control weeds and vegetative growth are more suitable than others.

Techniques include:

- foliar spraying
- basal bark spraying
- stem injection
- cut stump
- cut and swab
- stem scraper
- wick applicators.

Learn more about each of these [weed application methods](#).

## Pest animal control techniques

To control invasive pests and animals using chemicals, you should choose the most appropriate application method for the situation:

- [baiting for vertebrate pests](#)
- [fumigation of warrens](#)
- [spraying for locusts](#).

## Chemical residues

Agricultural and veterinary chemicals break down after application but some residues do remain on crops or in animals. It is important to follow the withholding period to make sure the residues are not at unacceptable levels. The [National Residue Survey](#) monitors chemical residues in food products.

Learn more about:

- [guarding against chemical residues in stock from drought feeds](#)
- [reducing the risk of chemical residues in livestock](#).

## Managing the risks of chemicals and contaminants

You can manage the risk of unacceptable chemical residues by using chemicals according to the instructions on

the label or permit.

Biosecurity Queensland, in conjunction with other government agencies, develops and implements monitoring, detection and management programs to further manage the risks posed by chemical residues.

Learn more about [monitoring and regulating chemical residues and contaminants](#).

Biosecurity Queensland also runs [veterinary and chemical residue laboratories](#).

## Related links

- Learn more about [types of herbicides](#).
  - Read [fact sheets and information on chemical use](#).
  - Learn about [integrated pest management strategies](#).
  - Read about [organics, the certification process and trade opportunities](#).
  - Visit the [Australasian Biological Control](#) website.
  - Learn about [national vendor declarations and waybills](#).
  - Learn about [residues from chemicals used to control locusts](#).
  - Read the [plague locust fact sheet](#).
  - Contact our [Customer Service Centre](#).
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## Licences and permits

All agricultural pilots who apply agricultural chemicals by aircraft in a regulated area of Queensland must have a pilot chemical rating licence.

In many cases, a person who uses ground equipment to apply herbicides to control weeds on land that they do not own or occupy needs to be licensed.

The business for which these operators undertake the spraying is also required to be licensed.

A special permit is needed to apply certain volatile agricultural chemical products in declared hazardous areas.

In many areas of the state, the legislation that regulates these licences does not apply. The legislation mainly applies in southern, eastern and central regions of Queensland. In other areas, licences are not required.

If you are uncertain whether you need a licence, [contact our Customer Service Centre](#).

## Licences

- [Aerial distribution of agricultural chemicals](#) - information on the regulatory aspects.
- [Ground distribution of herbicides](#) - information on the regulatory aspects.
- [How to obtain a commercial operator's licence](#).

## Permits

- How to apply for a [hazardous area herbicide distribution permit](#).
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# Treating animals with chemicals and medicines

There is a range of controls over the use of veterinary chemical products to treat animals.

Unless you are a veterinary surgeon, you can only use only registered veterinary chemical products, or those approved under permit, on animals. Chemicals must be used according to label or permit instructions.

Veterinary surgeons may vary the way the product can be used, provided that written instructions are given to the person in charge of the animal. There are strict limitations on the variations allowed for use on food-producing animals. These requirements reduce the potential risks to human health and trade arising from the use of chemicals on food and fibre-producing animals.

Treated food-producing animals must be identified during the treatment period and the withholding period.

The [Veterinary Surgeons Board](#) provides information on the conduct of veterinary science in Queensland.

## Related links

- Find out about [controls over the use of agricultural and veterinary chemicals in the aquaculture industry](#).
  - Learn about [Hormonal Growth Promotants \(HGPs\)](#).
  - Visit the [Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority \(APVMA\)](#) website.
  - Find out how to [submit samples for analysis - Biosecurity Queensland veterinary and chemical residue laboratories](#).
  - Read about the [National Livestock Identification System](#).
  - Read about the [Livestock Production Assurance System](#).
  - Find out how to [obtain and use National Vendor Declarations and waybills](#)
  - [Contact our Customer Service Centre](#)
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