
Preface

Grower Pesticide Safety Course

Certification for Ontario Farmers

Regulation 914 of the **Pesticides Act** makes it mandatory for farmers to be certified through the Grower Pesticide Safety Course to buy and use Schedules 1, 2 or 5 pesticides on land they farm. There must be at least **one** Certified Grower for each farm operation.

Do I Need to be Certified?



If you are a grower (farmer) and want to buy and use Schedule 1, 2 or 5 pesticides on land that you farm, you must be a Certified Grower.

Under the Pesticides Act, you are a grower (farmer) if you:

- ▶ currently use farm land for agricultural or forestry production **and**
- ▶ that farm land is classified as farmlands property under Section 7 of the **Ontario Assessment Act**.

You may own, rent, lease or share crop the farm land you use, or you may be employed on the farm land.

If you are not sure how your land is classified, please call the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation at **1-866-296-6722**. To find the location of the office nearest you, check the web site located at **www.mpac.ca**.

To become a Certified Grower you must:

- ▶ meet the definition of a grower under the **Pesticides Act**, **and**
- ▶ be at least 16 years of age, **and**
- ▶ attend a one day Grower Pesticide Safety Course, **and**
- ▶ successfully complete the certification exam.

Certified Growers must ensure that pesticides are purchased, used, stored, transported and disposed of according to the **Pesticides Act** and Regulation 914.

What is a Schedule 1, 2 or 5 Pesticide?

In Ontario, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment classifies pesticides into one of six Schedules. Schedule 1, 2 and 5 pesticides are more toxic and you must be trained before you can buy and use them.

A pesticide vendor cannot sell Schedule 1, 2 or 5 pesticides to growers unless they are certified through the **Grower Pesticide Safety Course**.

To find out if the products you plan to use on your farm are Schedule 1, 2 or 5 pesticides, contact your local vendor or consult Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs production publications.

Farmers who are not certified must hire the services of a licensed exterminator to purchase and apply Schedule 1, 2 and 5 pesticides for them.

How Can I Become a Certified Grower for the First Time?

A farmer can become a Certified Grower by attending a one-day **Grower Pesticide Safety Course (GPSC)** and passing the certification examination.

The **Grower Pesticide Safety Course** is the only course approved by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment to train Ontario farmers to become Certified Growers. You must renew your certificate every five years.

How Can I Renew My GPSC Certificate?

You have two ways to renew your certificate. You may:

- ▶ attend a GPSC and pass the exam you write at the course, **or**
- ▶ study the GPSC manual at home and pass the exam you write at an exam-only session.

The GPSC manual and exam are the same for first time and renewing growers.

How Can I Register for a GPSC?

The Ontario Pesticide Education Program at University of Guelph Ridgetown Campus co-ordinates the courses and exam-only sessions across Ontario. Most courses and exam-only sessions are offered between November and April. Check the web site located at www.ridgetownc.uoguelph.ca/o pep/ for a list of courses and exam-only sessions offered near you.

To register for a **Grower Pesticide Safety Course or GPSC Exam-Only Session** (if you are renewing your certificate) anywhere in Ontario please:

- ▶ call **1-800-652-8573**, or
- ▶ fax **1-519-674-1589**, or
- ▶ e-mail opep@ridgetownc.uoguelph.ca

In some areas, pesticide vendors work with University of Guelph Ridgetown Campus to co-ordinate courses for local growers. If there is a participating vendor in your area, your vendor may be able to take your GPSC registration directly. These courses are also listed on the web site.

Do Assistants Use Schedule 2 or 5 Pesticides on Your Farm?

All assistants must have pesticide safety training, recognized by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, before they can handle or use Schedule 2 or 5 pesticides under the supervision of a Certified Grower. This requirement was introduced in January 2000, and applies to all assistants, including family members, farm employees and seasonal workers. Trained Assistants do not have to write an exam. Trained Assistants must be 16 years of age or older.

There are two training options for assistants. Assistants can:

- ▶ attend a **Grower Pesticide Safety Course** and not write the certification examination, **or**
- ▶ attend an on-farm training session presented by a qualified Trained Assistant Instructor.

For more information about training for assistants, please check the web site located at www.ridgetownc.uoguelph.ca/o pep/. This site lists the Trained Assistant Instructor Courses offered near you.

To register for a Trained Assistant Instructor Course, anywhere in Ontario please:

- ▶ call **1-800-652-8573**, or
- ▶ fax **1-519-674-1589**, or
- ▶ e-mail **opep@ridgetownc.uoguelph.ca**

As a Certified Grower, you are responsible for all pesticide use and handling on your farm. This includes pesticide use and handling by Trained Assistants.

Why Was the Grower Pesticide Safety Course Developed?

The **Grower Pesticide Safety Course** was developed in response to the pesticide safety concerns expressed by farming organizations, the pesticide industry, government agencies and the public.

Pesticide safety training can help reduce the risks of pesticide use. The GPSC provides farmers with the information they need to ensure food safety, and to keep themselves, their families and the environment safe.

The Ontario Pesticide Education Program (OPEP) at University of Guelph Ridgetown Campus co-ordinates the **Grower Pesticide Safety Course** across the province, under the direction of a Steering Committee with representatives from:

- ▶ AGCare (Agricultural Groups Concerned about Resources and the Environment)
- ▶ Ontario Ministry of the Environment
- ▶ Ontario Agri Business Association (representing pesticide vendors)
- ▶ CropLife Canada (representing pesticide manufacturers and distributors)
- ▶ Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- ▶ University of Guelph Ridgetown Campus

This committee provides technical advice and support for this program.