



March 19, 2010

Gregg Regimbal MDA-PFMD
625 Robert Street N.
St. Paul, MN 55155-2538

Mr. Regimbal,

The Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation (Farm Bureau) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Atrazine Special Registration Review. Farm families live on the land, breathe the air, and drink the water. They are just as concerned as anyone about protecting the environment, and are committed to the responsible use of crop protectants according to label directions. Farm Bureau commends MDA, MPCA and MDH for conducting a thorough, two-year review and adhering to the scientific facts about atrazine.

Farm Bureau asks MDA to consider the following comments related to the review:

Atrazine is an important herbicide used to control weeds in Minnesota corn fields. There is no direct chemical replacement for atrazine that offers residual weed control for early season grass and broadleaf weeds. In addition, atrazine plays an important role in controlling aggressive weeds that have developed resistance to glyphosate. Furthermore, because atrazine is not subject to volatile drift, it compliments soil conservation programs by providing residual weed control in no-till corn systems.

Monitoring data shows that atrazine levels (which did not exceed water quality standards) are declining, which indicates that current regulations, enforcement and education are working. Minnesota farmers have a strong history of implementing BMPs such as buffer strips to protect our waters. Farm Bureau agrees with the agencies' conclusions (p. 10 of the summary) that "Current and historical prevention, evaluation and mitigation measures (e.g., label revisions, enforcement, monitoring and promotion and adoption of BMPs) have played an important role in protecting human health and the environment."

Farmers are responsible pesticide managers. Crop protectants are expensive and farmers don't benefit from over-applying them or exceeding state and federal application guidelines. Responsible herbicide use helps farmers produce a healthy and abundant crop while allowing them to farm with minimal tillage of the land. This helps keep sediment out of our lakes and rivers, and exhaust emissions out of our skies. Farmers and ranchers want clean water, and we are committed to do our part to protect water quality for our families and for all Minnesotans.

In summary, Farm Bureau supports the conclusions of MDA, MDH and MPCA in the Atrazine Special Registration Review. Please consider Farm Bureau's comments on atrazine. If you have any questions about Farm Bureau's comments, please contact Jeremy Geske or Chris Radatz at 651-768-2100.

Sincerely,

Kevin Paap
President