

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & CONSUMER SERVICES
CHARLES BRONSON, COMMISSIONER
OPERATION CLEANSWEEP PROGRESS REPORT
FISCAL YEAR 2002-2003



DIVISION OF AGRICULTURAL ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
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OPERATION CLEANSWEEP

Collection of Canceled, Suspended, and Unusable Pesticides

Progress Report for Fiscal Year 2002 - 2003

A Cooperative Project Involving:

Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
Florida Department of Environmental Protection
University of Florida - Institute of Food & Agricultural Sciences
& the Florida Cooperative Extension Service
United Agri Products, Inc.

Certified Pest Control Operators
Florida Citrus Mutual
Florida Fertilizer & Agrichemical Association
Florida Farm Bureau
Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association
Florida Nurseryman & Growers Association
Florida Pest Management Association
Florida Tomato Committee
Florida Turf Grass Association
Florida Forestry Association
Florida Peanut Producers Association
Florida Soybean Producers Association

August 5, 2003

Progress Report - Operation Cleansweep
Fiscal Year 2002-2003
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Introduction

Pesticides that can no longer be used as intended must be disposed of properly to prevent pollution of soil and water resources and unacceptable exposures to humans and wildlife. Pesticides become unusable as a result of regulatory action (cancellation or suspension of registered uses), or as a result of impairment of the product itself while in storage - such as expired shelf life, crystallization of a liquid in cold temperatures, or solidification of a dust formulation. Pesticide end-users may also no longer have a use for the pesticide, even if it is in usable condition.

Pesticide users face difficult choices when dealing with the unusable products - proper disposal may involve high costs or difficult regulatory requirements. When faced with an amount of unusable product, the easiest solution is generally to keep it in storage. However, long term storage presents a risk as well. Containers may leak, break or otherwise degrade. Property ownership changes and stored products may be acquired by people who are unaware of how to handle them. Labels deteriorate and become difficult to read, thus leaving the contents unidentifiable and unusable. Additionally, the threat of exposures to employees, contact with surrounding communities, and releases to the environment through soil, surface water or air, are other potential hazards associated with long term storage.

In order to address this problem in Florida, the Department of Environmental Protection and the Departments of Agriculture & Consumer Services have teamed with the University of Florida's Institute of Food & Agricultural Science, agricultural marketing groups and pesticide user groups to develop and implement "Operation Cleansweep," a program for collection and proper disposal of cancelled, suspended, and unusable pesticides (CSUP). Following a 1995 statewide collection of 70,000 pounds of lead arsenate, these agencies and user groups were able to conduct several small scale CSUP collections in a four county pilot project (1996-1997). One additional collection was also held in 1998. These efforts resulted in a collection of a total of 52,000 pounds of CSUP materials from more than 220 participants.

In State Fiscal Year (FY) 2000-2001, the Department of Environmental Protection received funding as part of the General Appropriations Act to start an ongoing pesticide collection program. This program, Operation Cleansweep, was funded by an appropriation from the Solid Waste Management Trust Fund at a level of \$300,000 for Fiscal Year 2000-2001. A total of 235,644 pounds of CSUP material was collected from 374 participants in ten one-day collection events. In FY 2001-2002, a total of 224,000 pounds of CSUP was collected from 357 participants. In State Fiscal Year 2002-2003, the Department of Environmental Protection received funding by an appropriation from the Solid Waste Management Trust Fund at a level of \$200,000.

Program Organization & Implementation

Operation Cleansweep continued with a Steering Committee composed of representatives from the Departments of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Environmental Protection, the University of Florida Institute of Food & Agricultural Sciences, the Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association, Florida Farm Bureau Federation, Florida Fertilizer & Agrichemical Association, Florida Citrus Mutual, Florida Pest Control Association, Certified Pest Control Operators of Florida, Turf Grass Association, and Florida Nurserymen & Growers Association.

The collection program was open to pesticide end-users from the agricultural, nursery, golf course, greenhouse, and pest control industries. Businesses in these industries could dispose of cancelled, suspended, and other-wise unusable pesticides free-of charge through this program. Pesticide distributors and retailers could participate in the program by paying the contract price for CSUP disposal.

The Department of Environmental Protection asked the Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (“Department”) to handle contracting and oversight of the project due to its familiarity with the pesticide end-user community. DACS issued an Invitation to Bid for a contractor to collect and properly dispose of the pesticides collected. Prospective contractors were required to bid on the basis of site safety and personal protection, collection, bulk packaging, transport, and disposal of the collected materials. Bids were received from four licensed hazardous waste contractors, and for FY 2002-2003 Clean Harbors Environmental Services of Bartow, Florida, was selected as the contractor, with a bid of \$1.09 per pound cost for all collected materials.

Under the terms of the contract, Clean Harbors Environmental Services provided all materials and services for collection, packaging, transport and disposal of the materials collected.

Pesticides collected were handled under federal and state hazardous waste regulations applicable to the Universal Waste Rule and for the purposes of the program, the Department of Environmental Protection became the generator.

Members of the Steering Committee notified their membership as to the availability of the program. DEP maintained a web site that provided up-to-date information on the program (<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/dwm/programs/cleansweep-pesticides>). Additionally, FDACS made available a toll-free phone line specifically for people to call in for assistance in getting their pesticides picked up.

Change in Collection Method

This year, the collection method was changed from previous years in that pesticides were collected at the user's establishment. Past years collections have been performed at a central location within each county. The contractor and support staff would set up a collection area to temporarily house the pesticides. While some of the contractor staff would be identifying and packing for disposal the incoming pesticides, others would manage the traffic flow into the site, greet incoming customers, conduct product surveys with each participant and hand out various pesticide disposal and BMP-related information.

In an effort to reach more people who may have missed a previous collection, the Operation Cleansweep 2002-2003 program was promoted as a statewide pesticide pick up program. This alleviated the problem of missing a one-time collection for the year by giving participants a time frame to schedule a pick up at their particular location. Additionally, pesticides kept in deteriorating containers were not transported on Florida streets and highways, rather these deteriorated containers were safely overpacked or repacked into more sturdy packaging prior to transporting by the contractor.

At each site pick up, staff from the Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services provided oversight and support. The contractor identified, weighed and characterized for disposal under the requirements of the Universal Waste Rule, then packed the pesticides for transport. As part of the operation, staff of the Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services distributed literature on safe pesticide handling and storage, and conducted a short interview with the participants to obtain information helpful in planning future Operation Cleansweep projects.

The advantages of this method of collection was noticed as soon as pick ups began. It is estimated that approximately one-fourth of the pesticides requiring disposal had containers or packaging in such poor condition that the property or business owners would not have attempted to come into a local collection point, due to the potential of a personal injury due to spills or exposures. At a few locations, the pesticide containers were so weathered that the Department instructed the contractor to remove visibly contaminated soil as a measure to reduce further site contamination problems.

Other locations required the removal of plywood flooring and wallboard that had adhered to pesticide packaging.

Results

This year's collection was an overwhelming success. The statewide participation count was 145. This number represents nine different categories of pesticide users. Over 126,000 pounds of unusable pesticides were safely picked up, transported out of the state of Florida and properly disposed of, thereby significantly reducing the threat of chemical accidents, health and safety hazards to humans and livestock, or contamination of soil, surface water, or groundwater. A copy of the complete pesticide totals by county is attached at the end of this report.

Results from our participant survey (completed by the participant at the site) indicates that citrus growers made up over 25% of the participants. Citrus and golf courses combined were over 51% of the participants. Many of the pesticides collected from citrus growers were unusable due to either cancelled registrations or the efficacy of the product was in question due to age. Pesticides that were offered for pick up tended to be older than five years. In general, these were no longer used due to crop changes or growers shifting to other pesticides. An example of the Department's survey form is attached at the end of this report.

A large part of the success of this program is due to the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) Agriculture Extension Service. A majority of the participants stated in their surveys that they were made aware of the Operation Cleansweep program through local extension meetings and information bulletins that were mailed out. A copy of the Operation Cleansweep bulletin is attached at the end of this report.

Additionally, the Department would like to thank United Agri Products for the tremendous assistance provided to this program by assisting many commercial growers that the Department could not contact due to time constraints.