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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Pete Ricketts, Governor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FARMERS, PESTICIDE APPLICATORS ENCOURAGED TO WORK TOGETHER TO PROTECT SENSITIVE SPECIALTY CROPS

LINCOLN – As spring planting season gets underway, the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) wants to remind farmers and other outdoor pesticide applicators to work together to protect sensitive specialty crops and pollinators from pesticide use. Pesticides include all categories of pest control products such as herbicides, insecticides and fungicides.

“Pesticides are important to farm management, but they affect commodity crops and specialty crops differently,” said NDA Director Greg Ibach. “For example, herbicide applications are critical for corn and soybean production, but some specialty crops, like grape vines and hops, are extremely sensitive to these products.”

One way farmers and other pesticide applicators can reduce potential damage to specialty crops and pollinators is by communicating with one another throughout the planting and growing season.

DriftWatch™ and BeeCheck™ are online mapping services from FieldWatch that allow those with commercial specialty crops, organic crops and beehives to report their field locations. It’s voluntary, free, easy to use and secure. Pesticide applicators can review the website to gain an understanding of the locations of specialty crops in their area. Included in the registry are commercial apiary sites, vineyards, orchards, fruit and vegetable grow sites, nursery and Christmas tree production sites and certified organic crops.

In Nebraska, 466 growers have registered a total of 1,151 specialty crops sites on DriftWatch™. Those sites are currently found in 74 of Nebraska’s 93 counties.

“As producers continue to register their sensitive specialty crops, I encourage them and pesticide applicators to work together to protect sensitive specialty crops,” said Ibach.

DriftWatch™ and BeeCheck™ can be found online at fieldwatch.com. NDA monitors the DriftWatch™ website for the state. For more information contact Craig Romary at (402) 471-2351.

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