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Home ▶ Registrations and permits ▶ Labelling codes ▶ Agricultural - Home garden and domestic pest-control products

Home garden and domestic pest-control products

1. Definition
2. Introduction
3. Labelling home garden and domestic pest-control products

1. Definition

Home garden and domestic pest-control products are products that contain an agricultural chemical and are available to the general public through normal retail outlets. Home garden products are for use on vegetables, fruit, trees, ornamentals, lawns and other areas around private dwellings, for the control of diseases, insect pests, weeds, snails, slugs and rodents. Private dwelling means a private dwelling house, boarding house, apartment house, common lodging house or special accommodation house. Domestic pest-control products are mainly used inside private dwellings to control common insect pests such as cockroaches, ants, spiders, silverfish, flies, mosquitoes and fleas.

For both home garden and domestic pest-control products:

- the agricultural chemical product must either be classified as exempt from poison scheduling or it must be a Schedule 5 or Schedule 6 poison as listed in the [Poisons Standard](#)
- there is flexibility in the pack size; commonly home garden packs have an upper size limit of approximately 1 litre or 1 kilogram; however, some ready-to-use products may exceed this, where products are ready to use or very dilute
- the treated vegetables and fruit should be primarily grown for personal consumption; that is, they should not be grown on a commercial scale or for sale
- no special precautions or personal protective equipment should be required for preparation and use of the agricultural chemical products or disposal of the product and its container – for example persons preparing or using the chemicals should not need any of the following: protective waterproof clothing, PVC or rubber apron, elbow-length PVC gloves, face shield, goggles, impervious footwear, half- or full-face respirator, or breathing apparatus with air supply. Containers should be able to be discarded by placing in household garbage without undue hazard.

2. Introduction

Some adaptation of the instructions and information in the [label content requirements](#) will often be needed to ensure that labels for this sector are appropriate for users of these products. The need for this adaptation arises because home garden and domestic pest-control products are used on a small scale. Also, most people using home garden and domestic pest-control products have limited:

- ability to identify the particular pest, disease or weed
- experience in handling agricultural chemicals, which tends to mean that they have:
 - a limited understanding of label directions and terminology, which can lead to errors in use
 - a limited knowledge of the required quantities of pesticide to prepare, which can lead to excess product being prepared and needing to be disposed of

- limited equipment for safely measuring and applying agricultural chemicals.

To make the labelling of these products more user friendly, this requirement of the Agricultural Labelling Code allows the:

- adoption of simpler, more easily understood headings, subheadings and other required wording
- restructuring of label text into a logical progression of steps, from opening the packet, through mixing and application to disposal.

The aim of this requirement of the Agricultural Labelling Code is to encourage both simplicity and flexibility in the labelling of home garden and domestic pest-control products.

3. Labelling home garden and domestic pest-control products

3.1. Products covered

The types of home garden and domestic pest-control products to which this requirement of the Agricultural Labelling Code applies include the following:

- Attractants and lures
- Bactericides and algaecides
- Biological control agents (bacteria and viruses)
- Fungicides
- Plant-growth promotants
- Plant-growth regulators
- Herbicides
- Insecticides
- Miticides
- Molluscicides
- Nematicides
- Repellents (insects and other animals)
- Rodenticides

Home garden products do not include those relating to animal health, food storage or industrial uses. Domestic chemical products do not include those products used primarily by the pest-control industry.

This requirement of the Agricultural Labelling Code does not apply to swimming pool products. They are regarded as having both domestic and commercial applications, and are covered by [this requirement of the Agricultural Labelling Code](#).

For aerosol products harmonised with New Zealand use the information on [Australian and New Zealand harmonised aerosol labelling](#).

3.2. What goes on the label?

Home garden and domestic pest-control product labels must include the follow items:

- An appropriate signal heading
- The name of the product
- The name(s) and content of active constituent(s) and all scheduled poisons, including scheduled additives and solvents (if present)
- A statement of claim(s) for use
- The net contents
- The name and address of the company marketing the product
- A 'How to use' section, and any other information needed for proper use
- The statement:

NOT TO BE USED FOR ANY PURPOSE, OR IN ANY MANNER, CONTRARY TO THIS LABEL UNLESS AUTHORISED

- Statements relating to withholding periods (WHPs) and any other limitations on use, as required
- A 'How to prepare' section, including general instructions, and mixing and spraying instructions
- Appropriate 'Caution' statements
- Appropriate 'Storage and disposal' statements
- Appropriate safety directions and first aid instructions
- The company warranty, reference to trade marks, hazardous goods symbols and (where required) bar codes
- The manufacturing lot identification, date of manufacture of formulation and (where required) expiry (use by) date
- The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) approval number

3.3. Where to place the information

3.3.1. Main panel

The main panel for home garden and domestic pest-control products follows the requirements set out in the requirements for [label layout and formatting](#), with some minor adjustments.

The areas where the requirements are the same include the signal heading, product name, 'Active constituent' statements and all situations pertaining to them (e.g. common name, solvents, mixtures, descriptive Australian Standard, 'Anticholinesterase' statement, contents, company name and address and APVMA approval numbers).

3.3.1.1. Signal words and phrases

A home garden product contains an agricultural chemical that is classified as exempt from poisons scheduling or is a Schedule 5 or 6 poison in the Standard for the Uniform Scheduling of Medicines and Poisons. Schedule 7 poisons require the signal warning:

DANGEROUS POISON

They are considered to be too toxic for use by householders or home gardeners; hence, they must not be labelled as home garden or domestic pest-control products.

Home garden products are required to follow the requirements for signal headings as detailed in the [label content requirements](#) for substances classified as exempt from scheduling or listed in Schedule 5 or 6.

3.3.1.2. Statement of claims for use

Statements of claims for use (known as 'broad claims') are necessary for agricultural home garden and domestic pest-control products. The [requirements specified](#) for label content still apply; however, adopting the following format may help to make the broad claims statement easier to read.

Where a number of pests, weeds or diseases are to be included, or where there is a particular pest in different situations, the broad claims may be clearly shown by putting the information into point form. For example:

Controls:

- Fruit fly
- Codling moth
- Oriental fruit moth
- And other pests
- On fruit and vegetables in the home garden

Controls caterpillars on:

- Flowers
- Ornamental shrubs
- Fruit trees
- Vegetables

- In the home garden

The inclusion of statement of claims for use in the form shown above is only possible if space permits. However, the phrase '... in the home garden' should be included in all statements of claims for use, to emphasise to the user that the product is intended for use in the home garden. Similarly, a phrase such as '... in the home' or '... for domestic use' should be included in all statements of claims for use, where practicable, for domestic pest-control products.

3.3.1.3. Prohibition and restriction statements

Prohibition and restriction statements are not required. Restricted agricultural chemicals will not be allowed to be used in home and domestic situations.

3.3.2. Ancillary panels

The ancillary panel should include information on how to prepare the product for use, and how to use, store and dispose of the product. This information should be simple, clear and concise; also, it should be written and structured in such a way as to make it comprehensible to most users.

3.3.2.1. 'How to use' section

The information on how to use a home garden and domestic pest-control product is usually best set out in a tabular format under the panel heading:

HOW TO USE

3.3.2.2. Restraints

The subheading 'Restraints' is not mandatory but may be included. The definition of a restraint in this situation is the same as for agricultural products. The statements should appear as the first item in the 'How to use' section, and should begin with the words

DO NOT

For example:

DO NOT apply if rain is expected within 24 hours.
--

DO NOT apply to plants suffering from stress.
--

DO NOT allow spray to contact plants you do not want killed.

3.3.2.3. Plants and situations

The table column containing the plants or situations being treated should have an appropriate heading such as 'Plant(s)' or 'Area(s)', depending on the use of the product.

The specific plant, groups of plants or particular situations should be listed in alphabetical order, to make it easy for readers to locate the information.

When a plant or a group of plants – vegetable, fruit or ornamental – is to be included in the 'How to use' section, the names used should be readily understood even by those with limited gardening knowledge. The terms commonly used on agricultural products (e.g. pome fruit, stone fruit, brassicas, root vegetables, legume vegetables and cucurbits) are not

necessarily the most appropriate for home garden products. Terms that are in regular use in the community (e.g. citrus) are acceptable.

To avoid confusion and to be consistent with the food groupings as recognised by other standards (eg the MRL Standard, and the Codex Classification of Foods and Animal Feedstuffs), if group terms such as brassicas and cucurbits need to be used, they must be given in the following format:

- Onions, shallots and related alliums
- Pumpkins, cucumbers, melons and related cucurbits
- Cucurbits (e.g. pumpkins, melons and cucumbers)
- Cabbages, cauliflowers, broccoli, sprouts and related brassicas
- Brassicas (including cabbages, cauliflowers and broccoli)
- Pome fruit (e.g. apples and pears).

This list is by no means exhaustive. A degree of discretion and flexibility is needed when including specific groups of plants in labels.

3.3.2.4. Pests, diseases and weeds controlled

Only the common name should be used for the pest, disease or weed, in line with the appropriate current references listed in the label content requirements. Scientific names should only be used on home garden labels when they are needed to avoid confusion. It is highly unlikely that scientific names would be required on the labels of domestic pest-control products.

Some examples of alternative names that may be used are 'sap-sucking insects', 'leaf-eating insects', 'grass weeds' or 'broad-leaf weeds'. These alternative names help to overcome a problem that occurs with most users; that is, limited ability to identify the particular pest, disease or weed.

Care needs to be taken in developing an alternative name because collective terms (e.g. 'mildews' and 'mites') are sometimes inappropriate. For example, the term 'mildew' would only be acceptable for fungicides that control both downy and powdery mildew. Additionally, depending on the spray program (dormant trees versus active trees), unnecessary and unsuccessful pesticide use could be promoted by the use of the term 'mites' on a spray label for dormant trees, because the particular mite is not an over-wintering species.

3.3.2.5. State

Unless otherwise indicated (e.g. 'QLD only'), a particular use will be judged as being approved in all states and territories; that is, the term 'All states' is not required.

Where differences between states occur for a particular use, it should be incorporated into the 'How to use' section in either the 'Plant', 'Pest', or 'How to apply' column. There is no need to include a separate 'State' column.

When listing the states for a particular use, list the state(s), followed by the word 'only'. For example:

NSW, VIC, WA ONLY

3.3.2.6. Rate

The method of application should be stated in clear terms, suitable for the intended rate of application.

For home garden and domestic pest-control products, the rate can be expressed either in terms of product dilution, for example:

Mix 5 mL per L of water

or quantity of product per unit area, for example:

Spray 15 mL per m²

or a combination of the 2, for example:

Mix 20 g per 10 L of water and spray over 10 m²

Home garden products containing a dust will not necessarily have a definite rate of application. For example, a statement such as 'Dust lightly, thoroughly covering all plant surfaces' is an adequate instruction on the application of a dust. Such a statement would be more appropriate in a 'How to apply' column than a 'Rate' column.

Giving precise recommendations for rates of dilution and rates of application is difficult, because of the large variety of home garden products. However, some general requirements that apply to rates are as follows:

- The maximum amount of water or other diluent to be expressed in a rate is 10 L. If a larger volume is required, a reason should be provided. This would help to ensure that excessive amounts of spray are not prepared.
- The amount of product (concentrate) to be diluted or sprayed should be expressed as a whole number when the units are in millilitres or grams. For example, '5 mL' or '10 g' are acceptable, but '1.5 mL' or '2.5 g' are not. If a fraction does occur in millilitres or grams when a rate appearing for an agricultural use is scaled down, then the figure should be rounded-off to the nearest whole number. Fractions are acceptable with litres and kilograms; for example, '1.75 L' or '1.5 kg'.
- The rate should be expressed in such a way that the amount of product (concentrate) is a value that can be easily measured or multiplied. Values such as multiples of 5 (e.g. 5, 10, 15, 20 ...) fit this criterion.
- A rate such as 'Mix 13 g per 5 L water' would be better expressed as 'Mix 5 g per 1.9 L water' or 'Mix 10 g per 3.8 L water'. These rates could be improved further still by rounding off the amount of diluent so the rate can finally be expressed as either 'Mix 5 g per 2 L water' or 'Mix 10 g per 4 L water'. However, the rounding-off of figures can only be done if the efficacy, phytotoxicity or hazard to non-target organisms of a particular product will not be affected to an unacceptable degree.

3.3.2.7. 'How to apply'

The basic requirements of the 'Critical comments' section as discussed in the [label content requirements](#) still apply. However, the heading of this column should be changed to a more meaningful title such as 'How to apply'.

For a particular plant or situation, some indication should also be given as to when, where and how much product should be used.

3.3.2.8. 'Limitation on use' statement

The following statement must be shown immediately after the 'How to use' section of the label:

NOT TO BE USED FOR ANY PURPOSE, OR IN ANY MANNER, CONTRARY TO THIS LABEL UNLESS AUTHORISED

This statement must be printed in bold-face sans-serif capital letters of at least 1.5 mm in height.

Note that the words 'Under appropriate legislation', which are normally included in this statement on agricultural products, are not required for home garden and domestic pest-control products.

3.3.2.9. Withholding periods

Information on withholding periods (WHPs) should appear as one or more statements immediately below the 'Limitations on use' statement.

All the requirements concerning the setting and publishing of withholding periods are the same as specified in the [label content requirements](#).

Definition:

The WHP for home garden products is the period that must elapse between the last spray, dusting or application of the pesticide and the picking of plant products for human consumption.

Statement:

The withholding period should be shown as a figure in days or weeks, as specified in the [label content requirements](#).

There is no need to include either a 'WHP' column in the 'How to use' table, as is required for agricultural products, or a 'Withholding period' heading at the beginning of the WHP statements.

Examples of 'Withholding period' statements:

For home and domestic use, WHP statements differ from those on agricultural products – the former start with the words 'Do not pick' rather than 'Do not harvest'. Since pesticides can be applied in many forms (spray, dust, granules, etc.), the method of application should be reflected in the WHP statement. Some examples are:

DO NOT PICK TOMATOES FOR 7 DAYS AFTER SPRAYING

DO NOT PICK EDIBLE PLANTS FOR 2 DAYS AFTER DUSTING

DO NOT PICK VEGETABLES FOR 1 DAY AFTER APPLYING PELLETS

If certain plants have the same WHP, the statements can be combined, for example:

DO NOT PICK:

APPLES, PUMPKINS FOR 7 DAYS AFTER SPRAYING

CITRUS, CABBAGES FOR 5 DAYS AFTER SPRAYING

Statements should be in bold-face sans-serif capital letters of at least 2 mm in height, and each statement should be written on a separate line.

3.3.2.10. 'How to prepare'

The 'How to prepare' heading replaces the 'General instructions' heading that is required for agricultural chemicals. A heading such as 'How to prepare' conveys a better idea of the information contained thereunder.

The 'How to prepare' section should contain information concerning:

- how to prepare and mix the product (if applicable)
- the type of equipment to use, and how to maintain and clean that equipment.

This section should also contain, if applicable, statements such as:

Do not mix more than is needed

Do not mix more than can be used within [x] days

It should also contain a specification of how much spray should be mixed for an area of garden or for a specific number of plants, for example:

[x] litres of spray will normally cover [y] plants

[x] grams of dust will normally cover [y] plants

[x] litres of spray will normally cover [y] square metres

These statements should help the end users to prepare the appropriate amount of pesticide, thus minimising the need to dispose of excess prepared product.

3.3.2.11. Mode of action

Information relating to the mode of action of the product is not needed on labels for home garden and domestic pest-control products. Such statements would only clutter up the label with unnecessary information. Compatibility statements are also unnecessary, because home garden and domestic pest-control products should be of a type that would not require mixing with other products.

3.3.2.12. Caution

'Precautionary' and 'Protection' statements, which are specified separately on agricultural product labels (see the [label content requirements](#)), should be set out clearly under the single heading:

CAUTION

Each statement should begin with either the words 'Do' or 'Do not', for example:

DO NOT allow spray to contact poultry or poultry houses.

DO NOT spray aviaries.

The following statement must always appear in the 'Caution' section of home garden herbicides:

DO NOT allow spray to contact or drift onto plants you do not want killed.

The following statement must always appear in the 'Caution' section of all home garden products:

DO NOT allow chemical containers or spray to get into drains, sewers, streams or ponds.

Domestic pest-control products, where applicable, must contain a statement to the effect:

DO NOT spray directly on humans, pets, exposed food, food preparation areas or food utensils.

These statements may need to be modified for a product that is intended for use in these situations.

For example, if a product is particularly hazardous to bees, an appropriate statement might be:

DO NOT spray if bees are feeding on flowering plants. Will kill bees.

When including such a statement, any conflict between the proposed use pattern of the chemical and the advice on bee hazard should be avoided.

3.3.2.13. Storage and disposal

Storage and disposal statements should be set out clearly under the heading:

STORAGE AND DISPOSAL

Aerosol products should be marked:

Keep in a cool place out of the sun, and out of the reach of children. Do not incinerate or puncture this can, even when empty. Dispose of can by putting in garbage, or leaving it at an appropriate metal recycling collection point.

For all other types of packaging, home garden and domestic pest-control products require the following statement:

Store in the closed, original container in a cool, dry place out of the reach of children. Do not store in direct sunlight. Dispose of empty container by wrapping in paper, placing in plastic bag and putting in garbage.

3.3.2.14. First aid and safety directions

The label content requirements with respect to safety directions and first aid apply.

3.3.2.15. Special considerations

Anticoagulant rodenticides:

The label content requirements apply, except for the inclusion of the headings and subheadings (e.g. 'How to use' and 'Caution'), and the deletion of a 'Restrictions' heading.

The following carcass disposal statement should be included:

Dispose of carcasses by wrapping in paper, placing in plastic bag and putting in garbage.

3.3.2.16. Snail and slug baits:

In addition to the usual requirements of the requirements, all snail and slug bait type products must include the following information:

- A statement that heaps of product are to be avoided; for example:

DO NOT HEAP PELLETS

and

- The following statement under the 'Caution' section:

Store in original container. Lock in a safe place preventing access of children, animals, poultry or ducks. Keep away from domestic pets. Keep away from dogs. Dogs find this bait attractive and it may kill them. If pets are poisoned, contact a veterinary surgeon.

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The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) is the Australian Government regulator of agricultural and veterinary (agvet) chemical products.

We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of country throughout Australia and acknowledge their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to the people, the cultures and the elders past, present and emerging.