

LESSON 2: APPENDIX C

What is a Pesticide?

What is a pesticide?

A pesticide is any substance or mixture of substances intended for:

- preventing,
- destroying,
- repelling, or
- mitigating any pest.

Though often misunderstood to refer only to insecticides, the term pesticide also applies to herbicides, fungicides, and various other substances used to control pests.

Pesticides that are related because they address the same type of pests include:

TYPE OF PESTICIDE	CONTROL:
Algicides	Control algae in lakes, canals, swimming pools, water tanks and other sites.
Antifouling Agents	Kill or repel organisms that attach to underwater surfaces, such as boat bottoms.
Antimicrobials	Kill microorganisms (such as bacteria and viruses).
Attractants	Attract pests (for example, to lure an insect or rodent to a trap – with the exception of food which is not considered a pesticide when used as an attractant.)
Biopesticides	Biopesticides are certain types of pesticides derived from such natural materials as animals, plants, bacteria, and certain minerals.
Biocides	Kill microorganisms.
Defoliants	Cause leaves or other foliage to drop from a plant, usually to facilitate harvest.
Desiccants	Promote drying of living tissues, such as unwanted plant tops.

TYPE OF PESTICIDE	CONTROL:
Disinfectants and sanitizers	Kill or inactivate disease-producing microorganisms on inanimate objects.
Fungicides	Kill fungi (including blights, mildews, molds and rusts).
Fumigants	Produce gas or vapor intended to destroy pests in buildings or soil.
Herbicides	Kill weeds and other plants that grow where they are not wanted.
Insecticides	Kill insects and other arthropods.
Insect Growth Regulator	Disrupt the molting, maturity from pupal stage to adult, or other life processes of insects.
Miticides (also called acaricides)	Kill mites that feed on plants and animals.
Microbial Pesticides	Microorganisms that kill, inhibit, or out compete pests, including other microorganisms.
Molluscicides	Kills snails and slugs.
Nematicides	Kill nematodes (microscopic, worm like organisms that fee on plant roots).
Ovicides	Kill eggs of insects and mites.
Plant Growth Regulator	Substances (excluding fertilizers or other plant nutrients) that alter the expected growth, flowering, or reproduction rate of plants.
Pheromones	Biochemical used to disrupt the mating behavior of insects.
Repellents	Repel pests, including insects (such as mosquitoes) and birds.
Rodenticides	Control mice and other rodents.

Adapted from: U.S. EPA <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/about/index.htm>