

ANR Cooperative Extension Risk Assessment Best Practices

Food Chain (Environmental) Contamination

A. Agreements and Communication

1. Have formal agreements with co-operators ensuring there is both verbal and written acknowledgement of known risks and liabilities, including specifying liability insurance that is in place to protect the cooperator
2. Foster close working relationships between researchers and co-operators through frequent communication, especially as harvest approaches
3. Engage in formal agreements between co-operators, chemical companies and researchers
4. Develop a template for a MOU between researchers, co-operators, and chemical companies
5. Develop a creative way (e.g., a calendar for the dashboard, a sticker for the phone, etc.) to remind the grower co-operator, e.g., "Do not harvest the crop plot until you call 'Principal Investigator'."

B. Compliance with Regulations

1. Comply with county and state regulations regarding pesticide use, research and experimental non-labeled materials
2. Comply with current regulations and UC guidelines regarding genetically modified food products and crops
3. Ensure proper labeling and signage at research plots
4. Foster close working relationships between researchers and co-operators through frequent communication, especially as harvest approaches
5. Give only trained full-time employees the responsibility for pesticide screening or other "high risk" research activities
6. Work with regulatory, educational/research and legal consultants to develop good guidelines before problems happen
7. Develop guidelines for working with experimental, unlabeled materials and have them available on the Web

C. Other Activities

1. Attempt to place research plots in locations that are out of view and part of the natural landscape
2. Ensure our efforts to help in production and marketing of organic crops do not appear as if we are promoting those systems as the "best" or "safest" production system
3. Educate staff in other disciplines about current research in new controversial topics resulting in differing messages from UC staff regarding research-based information

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4. Allow specialists to conduct “high risk” plots in counties when they have the knowledge and cooperation of local advisors and county directors
5. Provide standard sets of rules and disciplinary actions for campus-based specialists and faculty
6. Conduct “Devil’s Advocate” discussions about the research going on to see if any obvious oversights have occurred