



April 10, 2024

**For Immediate Release**

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### **ONLINE MAPPING SERVICE HELPS PROTECT WORKERS, SENSITIVE CROPS, POLLINATORS**

LINCOLN— Pesticides are used in agriculture to help farmers protect crops from pests, diseases, and weeds. Some crops, like fruit and vegetable specialty crops, and the pollinators of those crops, can be sensitive to pesticides. That’s why the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) contracts with FieldWatch™, an online mapping service designed to help pesticide applicators, commercial specialty crop growers and beekeepers communicate with one another to protect crops and pollinators from pesticides. Pesticides include all categories of pest control products such as herbicides, insecticides, and fungicides.

“NDA’s Pesticide program has a big responsibility in Nebraska and that’s to regulate the distribution, storage, and use of all pesticides in the state,” said NDA Director Sherry Vinton. “We take these responsibilities seriously and use available tools, like online mapping resources, to help people in the ag industry work together to protect farm workers, specialty crops, and pollinators from pesticides.”

Included in the online mapping services of FieldWatch are commercial apiary sites, vineyards, orchards, fruit and vegetable grow sites, nursery and Christmas tree production sites, and certified organic and transitional organic crops.

Using services like FieldWatch may help satisfy certain requirements on pesticide product labels. Depending on the product, applicators may be required to check the FieldWatch map for specialty crops or beehives, survey the area adjacent to the application site for these crops, and use no-spray buffers or apply another day if the wind is blowing toward a commercial specialty crop.

In Nebraska, 710 growers have registered a total of 2,333 specialty crop and apiary sites in FieldWatch. Those sites are currently found in 84 of Nebraska’s 93 counties and contain approximately 147,000 acres of specialty crops. New sites are added frequently.

FieldWatch registration is voluntary, free, easy to use, and secure. Pesticide applicators can view maps, sign up for free email alerts and get the free FieldCheck™ app, or receive direct data feeds or downloads.

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In addition, applicators registered in FieldCheck can benefit from viewing detasseling operation locations which helps ag applicators stay in compliance with label directions for worker safety. Approximately 143,700 acres of seed corn in 1,350 fields were displayed last year.

FieldWatch also integrates corn and soybeans with various herbicide traits into the mapping system. This enables row crop producers and pesticide applicators to work together to increase pesticide stewardship. When using the DriftWatch registry, producers create an account and map their fields.

Information about FieldWatch and its registries (FieldCheck, DriftWatch, BeeCheck and SeedFieldCheck) can be found at <https://nda.nebraska.gov/pesticide/fieldwatch.html> or by calling NDA at 402-471-2351.

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