**The Life Cycle of a Specialty Pesticide Product**

A lot of thought, time and testing goes in to developing a product before it hits your store shelf for purchase. Each step in the development process of a specialty pesticide product is purpose-built to ensure all of your products are effective and can be used safely. This process consists of seven areas which incorporate stewardship from beginning to end:

1. **Identifying the problems and selecting the proper tools**

Before a product is researched and developed, a problem for it to solve must first be identified. Whether it be defending again disease-carrying ticks or preventing plant-choking invasive species, the goal of the industry is to identify the various types of problems and their severity and then work to find the most effective solution for each individual pest issue. There are numerous pest issues, but each requires a distinctive treatment based on the characteristic of the pest itself. To achieve this goal, research and development companies collect input and data from university researchers, applicators, public health officials, and the government to develop a comprehensive understanding of the issue.

1. **Stewardship in research and development**

The collected resources and data act as a reliable database, guiding the companies to the most effective solution for the pest issue. These companies ensure the products, while being tough on pests, are safe for both your family and the environment.

1. **Efficacy testing**

Once the product is developed, the solution sample goes through a series of efficacy test, logging data and results, to ensure that the product works as intended and does not cause unintended adverse effects. This efficacy test decides what will be written on the product’s label.

1. **Creating a pesticide label**

After the product proves its value, the company will send a written label with directions on how to mix, apply, store and dispose along with any claims and relevant studies to the EPA for review. If qualified, the product will earn an EPA’s stamp of approvals and be ready for state registration.  The company then submits its EPA-labeled products and an application to state authorities. State registration takes place for all of the product’s potential state markets.

1. **Applying the label**

With both the EPA and state’s approval, the product is one step closer to a store near you. The directions for use on the label describe how the product may legally be used – on what pests, application methods, storage and disposal, other necessary requirements. The registrant company is then responsible for the 3P process: Production, Printing, and Packaging.

Generally, after the label is attached, products enter the distribution chain and are sold to applicators and consumers like you. Sometimes, labels are not available in time for seasonal sales so product availability may be delayed for a later date. This is a thorough process that can take several years to review, test and approve, ensuring intended use and safety of application.

1. **Application in lawn & landscape**

Even after products are tested, approved, and available for customers and applicators, proper application and safety should always be top of mind.

To use the product at its best, applicators and consumers also have to go through three steps:

* Detection of the pest issue
* Identification of the proper tools
* Proper application, which includes reading and following the label

And remember, when selecting and using pesticides, you should always read and follow all product label directions to make sure the product works properly and is used safely.

1. **Pesticide safety and education**

Through this process, each decision of the specialty pesticide product life cycle ispurpose-built to fit the needs of your family and your community.

Where we play and where we work are the same places pests lurk. So, understanding how to control pests in our offices, schools, backyards, playgrounds and parks, helps protect your community from disease and distress. Applicators are trained and licensed professionals who must regularly earn continuing education credits to ensure they are educated on the proper use, application and latest iterations of products.

For more information about how stewardship is incorporated from research and development through application, visit: <http://1.usa.gov/1NlWxbg>

If you would also like more information about the EPA’s role in the product life cycle, check out the information below or visit: <http://1.usa.gov/1NlWxbg>