

## Private Pesticide Applicator Certification

Federal and state law states a private pesticide applicator must be certified and licensed to buy, use or supervise the use of, restricted-use pesticides to produce an agricultural commodity on property they own or rent or on an employer's property if the applicator is an employee of a farmer. No pesticide license is needed if one will only be using general use pesticides on their farm.

Applicators whose certification is due to expire on April 15, 2006 will receive a letter from the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA). Bring the letter to the training session. The NDA letter contains a bar-code form and will make the application process much simpler and faster than filling in the "bubble" form.

There are two remaining Private Pesticide Applicator training sessions at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln:

- Thursday, Feb. 9 • 6:30–9:30 p.m.
- Friday, Feb. 10 • 8:30–11:30 a.m.

There is a \$15 extension training fee collected at the training session. When the NDA receives the application from the extension office, private applicators will be billed \$25 for a license fee. The license is good for three years, expiring on April 15, 2009 for those who certify this spring.

An alternative to attending the training session is to pick up a self study book at the extension office, read the chapters, complete the test questions and bring the book back to the office where the test will be graded. The application form will be forwarded to the NDA after the test has been scored. A \$30 materials fee will be collected when the book is picked up.

## Commercial Pesticide Applicator Training

Commercial applicators are persons who apply restricted-use pesticides for any purpose on any property other than property owned or rented by the applicator or their employer or for hire or compensation. Commercial applicators shall also include any person who applies lawn care or structural pest control pesticides whether restricted-use or general-use to property of another person. Public employees (employed by a town, county, state) applying mosquito control pesticides whether restricted-use or general-use, must also hold a commercial or non-commercial certification.

You must pass a written examination in the general standards category and one or more additional categories to become licensed initially as a commercial applicator. A commercial license is good for three years. Once licensed in a category, you can maintain commercial certification by attending a recertification training session or by passing a written examination, with a few exceptions explained below.

Initial commercial certification training and testing sessions for commercial applicators will be held on Feb. 7, March 7 and April 20 at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. General standards starts at 9 a.m. and other categories begin at 1 p.m. or 3 p.m. It is highly recommended you obtain and review written study materials prior to attending the training session for initial certification to improve your chances of passing the written examination.

Commercial recertification sessions will be held Feb. 9 and March 21 with general standards starting at 9 a.m. and other categories beginning at 1 p.m. or 3 p.m.

Note: Due to time and space limitations, only specific categories will be presented on training days. Call the pesticide education office at 472-1632 or UNL Extension in Lancaster County at 441-7180 to learn which specific categories will be offered on a given day.

Call the UNL Pesticide Education office at 472-1632 to register for a training session. The training fee for either initial or recertification sessions is \$30. Commercial applicators who wish to pick up additional certification in a specific category should register as well. The training fee for adding one or more categories to an existing certification is \$15. Commercial applicators meeting the requirements for certification or recertification will receive a bill from the Nebraska Department of Agriculture for \$90 for the license fee (good for three years).

Study materials for all commercial categories may be purchased from the pesticide education office, UNL East Campus, 101 Natural Resources Hall, Lincoln or accessed online at <http://pested.unl.edu/pat/>.

In addition to the training sessions mentioned above, applicators already certified in General Standards and Agricultural Plant categories (and Regulatory and the Demonstration/Research subcategories) can recertify by attending the Crop Protection Clinic on Jan. 23.

## Chemigation Certification Training

In order to apply pesticides or fertilizer in irrigation water, a permit must be obtained for the site and the person who oversees the application must be certified as a chemigator. To obtain a chemigation permit for a site, application must be made with the local Natural Resources District, a fee paid and the site must pass inspection by NRD personnel. State law requires the operator to receive training and pass a written test to be certified as a chemigator. Certification is good for four years. A chemigation training and testing session will be held Tuesday, Feb. 7, 6:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center.

## Dormant Spray for Alfalfa Weeds

**Bruce Anderson**  
*Extension Forage Specialist*

In a few weeks, spring weather will green up your alfalfa. Before that happens, you should do a little weed control. Weeds like pennycress, downy brome, mustards, cheatgrass and shepherd's purse are common in first cut alfalfa. They lower yields, reduce quality, lessen palatability and slow hay drydown. If you walk over your fields, you probably will be able to see their small, green, over-wintering growth.

You can't do much to control these weeds once alfalfa starts growing. However, if you treat the alfalfa as soon as possible during the next burst of spring-like weather, you can have cleaner, healthier alfalfa at first cutting.

Several herbicides can help control winter annual grasses and weeds in alfalfa. They include Karmex, Sencor, Velpar, Sinbar, Pursuit and Raptor. They all control mustard and pennycress. Karmex and Pursuit do not control downy brome very well, but Karmex has enough residual soil activity

to help control a few summer annual grasses like foxtail and barnyardgrass.

To be successful, you must apply most of these herbicides before alfalfa shoots green-up this spring—to avoid injury to the alfalfa. If you wait and alfalfa shoots are green when you spray, the alfalfa growth might be set back two or three weeks.

Timing is everything when controlling winter annual weeds in alfalfa. Get ready now, in the next few weeks before alfalfa greens up, take advantage of nice weather when you get it.

## Crop Protection Clinic, Jan. 23

A Crop Protection Clinic will be held Monday, Jan. 23 at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. Registration begins at 8 a.m. with sessions continuing from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The \$30 registration fee includes proceedings, publications, refreshments and the noon meal.

This very popular clinic offers many topics of interest to crop producers and agribusiness professionals alike. As usual, the latest developments in weed, insect and disease management topics will be covered. A partial list of specific topics this year includes: Soybean Insects Update, Foliar Fungicides 101, Weeds on the Increase, Soybean Diseases Update, Doing a Professional Job of Pesticide Application, What's New with Pest Management and Bt Corn Hybrids: Selection and Resistance Management.

The clinic will wrap up with a session for commercial applicator certification where commercial pesticide applicators will be able to recertify in General Standards, Ag Plant, Regulatory and Demonstration & Research by attending the entire workshop session.

## Boost Profits by at Least \$20/ Acre Workshop, Feb. 15

A workshop, Ten Easy Ways to Boost Profits \$20/Acre, will be held Wednesday, Feb. 15, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Educator Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. Presented by University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension at locations across the state, this workshop series features a "catalogue" of ideas to boost profits. Cost for the workshop is \$20 for the first person and \$10 for one additional person from an operation. The cost includes the notebook, noon meal and further follow-up materials in 2006. Registration with payment is due by Feb. 10 to guarantee adequate materials and meals.

Designed and tested by farmers, this research-based program will help you develop a plan for squeezing more dollars from tight crop production margins. Ten practices which are easy to adopt and can improve an operation's margin or profit will be presented. Speakers will describe each practice, where it was tested, how it leads to cost savings and how it can be implemented.

Each workshop will feature an energy overview and the effects of increasing energy costs on profitability. Other topics chosen for the Lincoln workshop include: No-till for Dryland Saves Moisture; Resistant Varieties for Soybean Diseases; Improve Irrigation Pumping Plant Efficiency; Use On-farm Research to See What Works for You; Credit Carryover Soil Nitrogen; Credit Soil Organic Matter; Take Advantage of Manure/Biosolids Resources; Credit Legumes in Rotations and Eliminate Unnecessary P-K-S Fertilizer Applications. While only ten practices can be featured at each workshop, the program covers 22 practices, all of which will be detailed in a notebook provided to registered participants.

## Fertilizing Crop Land with Biosolids Workshop, March 9

An educational workshop about Lincoln's Biosolids program, Fertilizing Crop Land with Biosolids, will be held Thursday, March 9 from 3:30–8:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. Presented by extension and City of Lincoln personnel, the workshop is aimed at farmers who might want to participate in the Biosolids Land Application program, though anyone may attend. Please preregister by Tuesday, March 7 by calling 441-7180. If you have any questions, please call and ask for Barb Ogg.

Biosolids are organic solids separated from wastewater and biologically processed during wastewater treatment to make them safe for land application. UNL Extension in Lancaster County coordinates distribution and application of biosolids to agricultural cropland for the City of Lincoln Wastewater and Solid Waste Division.

Workshop attendees will learn:

- using biosolids will reduce fertilizer costs and increase yields
  - biosolids improves soil tilth, especially on poor or eroded soil
  - biosolids increases organic matter and water holding capacity
  - how wastewater is processed and made safe for application
  - how regulations determine application rates and locations
  - how GPS and GIS technology is used in Lincoln's Biosolids Program
- Program will also include a tour of the Theresa Street Wastewater Facility.