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**NDA ENCOURAGES PESTICIDE APPLICATORS, SPECIALTY CROP GROWERS
AND BEEKEEPERS TO WORK TOGETHER TO PROTECT SENSITIVE CROPS**

LINCOLN—Commercial specialty crops, like fruits and vegetables, are an important part of Nebraska agriculture, adding variety and value to the state’s ag industry. But these crops can be sensitive to pesticides from neighboring farms. That’s why the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) is encouraging growers, beekeepers and pesticide applicators to work together to protect sensitive crops and pollinators from pesticides. Pesticides include all categories of pest control products such as herbicides, insecticides and fungicides.

“Free mapping resources are available online to help pesticide applicators communicate with commercial specialty crop growers and beekeepers throughout the planting and growing season,” said NDA Director Steve Wellman. “Pesticide applicators can review maps online to see where sensitive specialty crops and beehives are located to help protect them from harmful pesticides.”

DriftWatch™ and BeeCheck™ are online mapping services from FieldWatch™ designed for reporting field locations of commercial specialty crops, organic crops and beehives. Included in the FieldWatch registry are commercial apiary sites, vineyards, orchards, fruit and vegetable grow sites, nursery and Christmas tree production sites and certified organic and transitional organic crops.

Online mapping services help satisfy requirements on certain pesticide product labels. Depending on the product, applicators may be required to check the DriftWatch 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, 734 growers have registered a total of 2,135 specialty crop and apiary sites in FieldWatch. Those sites are currently found in 82 of Nebraska’s 93 counties and contain more than 125,000 acres of specialty crops. NDA monitors the FieldWatch registries for the state.

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. In addition, applicators registered in FieldCheck can take advantage of SeedFieldCheck, which allows seed companies to post locations of detasseling operations which helps ag applicators stay in compliance with label directions for worker safety. Approximately 70,000 acres in 700 fields were displayed last year.

This year, FieldWatch will integrate corn and soybeans with various herbicide traits into the DriftWatch mapping system. This will enable row crop producers and pesticide applicators to work together to increase pesticide stewardship.

Information about FieldWatch, FieldCheck, DriftWatch and BeeCheck can be found at <https://nda.nebraska.gov/pesticide/fieldwatch.html> or by calling NDA Program Specialist Craig Romary at 402-471-2351.

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