



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Spray Safe Specifics
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State Agency Funds Farmer Initiative to Protect Workers

Watsonville, CA – California’s Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) has awarded the Alliance for Food & Farming a \$50,000 grant towards the continued development of *Spray Safe*, an innovative new program in agriculture. *Spray Safe*, which was created by a group of Kern County farm interests with assistance from the Alliance, is a program designed to reduce spray drift, enhance worker safety and protect public health through more effective communications. It has received broad support from environmental groups, legislators and regulators.

“I am very pleased that DPR is providing this support towards the continued development of *Spray Safe*,” said Teresa DeAnda of El Comité para el Bienestar de Earlimart. DeAnda, long-time advocate for farm worker safety and supporter of the *Spray Safe* program. “*Spray Safe* is a way for farmers to communicate with each other, thus working towards reducing any incidents of pesticide exposure.”

According to the Alliance, the *Spray Safe* program is about encouraging increased communication among farmers and stresses increased vigilance in the field to protect public health, particularly with respect to farm workers and field crews. The DPR grant award will be utilized, along with matching industry funds, to develop coalitions in three counties interested in launching *Spray Safe* in 2009 and to pay for materials and promotional items designed to get the word out about the program.

"I have always supported the *Spray Safe* program developed by concerned Kern County farmers and applaud DPR for supporting this pro-active approach to protecting the safety of workers in the fields," said Dean Florez, California State Senator.

“Kern County has shown that through an industry initiative like *Spray Safe* improvements can occur voluntarily, therefore reducing the need for formal regulatory actions by DPR,” said Mary-Ann Warmerdam, Director of the California Department of Pesticide Regulation. “The Department strongly supports this voluntary approach to improved communications and is hopeful other counties will adopt *Spray Safe* on a continuing basis.”

Spray Safe was developed and launched in April, 2006 by the Kern Drift Prevention Coalition (KDPC) and the Alliance for Food and Farming. KDPC includes over 50 Kern County farmers, farm organizations, pest control advisors, applicators and labor contractors. The Alliance membership includes 50 agricultural groups and works to educate the public about food safety and food production issues.

For more information about *Spray Safe* please contact Ken Melban of the Alliance for Food & Farming at (559) 595-9256.

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