



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



World Health  
Organization

## International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management

# Guidance for inspection of pesticide producers, importers, distributors and retailers





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on Pesticide Management**

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distributors and retailers**

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  
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## Foreword

In recent decades, countries on all continents and at all stages of development have adopted laws and regulations on pesticides to protect human health and the environment while assuring the availability of products for food production and public health. Ensuring compliance with these laws and regulations can, however, be difficult, and violations are frequent in many countries. This is a serious problem. As noted in the *FAO Guidelines on compliance and enforcement of a pesticide regulatory programme (1)*,

even the best designed and most comprehensive regulatory systems cannot accomplish their purpose unless there is real, meaningful compliance with their requirements. Mere paper requirements can create a false sense of security.

The guidelines continue:

Compliance requires competency and expertise, involves costs, and comes only when regulated entities have a willingness and even a commitment to invest the resources and efforts necessary to comply. This will almost always require the involvement of government and the establishment of government enforcement programmes. Governments face considerable challenges in finding ways to motivate compliance successfully, and generally have to establish an approach to compliance and enforcement using a variety of tools and over a period of time. There is no single effective formula for achieving compliance. There is only trial, evaluation and feedback, and attention to what works and what does not work in each specific situation. Getting started with enforcement programmes can be a discouraging task, and it is important to consider that some enforcement is better than no enforcement, and that every government has to start somewhere and build from available structures and tools.

The guidance provided in this publication is on enforcing compliance by on-site inspection of companies involved in pesticide production, import, distribution and retail sale. The publication is intended to be a practical, hands-on tool, with checklists that inspectors can use to prepare and conduct inspections at various sites and impose fines or penalties if deficiencies are found. It proposes a format for the report that inspectors submit to the responsible authorities after an inspection and that is filed for future reference.

The guidance was prepared with the support of the FAO/WHO Joint Meeting on Pesticide Management, which advises FAO and WHO on producing guidance to promote compliance with the International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management. The document was reviewed by experts of the Working Groups on Biocides and Pesticides of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and their contributions are gratefully acknowledged.

### **The International Code of Conduct**

The *International Code of Conduct on pesticide management* sets out a framework and voluntary standards of conduct that should be followed in any activity related to pesticide management. Endorsed by FAO, WHO, governments, pesticide producers, nongovernmental organizations and other stakeholders, the Code of Conduct emphasizes stakeholders' shared responsibility for promoting best practice and risk reduction throughout the life cycle of a pesticide. The Code of Conduct thereby establishes the commitment and moral obligation of stakeholders to comply with the agreed standards of conduct and to assume their respective responsibilities.

Specific articles of the Code of Conduct relate to specific aspects of pesticide production, import, distribution and sale, e.g. Article 5.5.3 on the siting of pesticide manufacturing and formulating plants, Article 8 on distribution and trade and Article 10 on storage and disposal.

## **FAO and WHO welcome feedback**

FAO and WHO consider this guidance a living document that could be improved. They therefore welcome any feedback and comments from readers. They would value examples of how the guidance is used.

Please send your suggestions, comments and examples to [pesticide-management@fao.org](mailto:pesticide-management@fao.org), indicating the title of the guidance and the relevant section and page.

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