

## Perspectives of the Agricultural Chemicals Industry of Applicability of GHS

APEC GHS Implementation Seminar  
Bangkok, 20-21 September 2006



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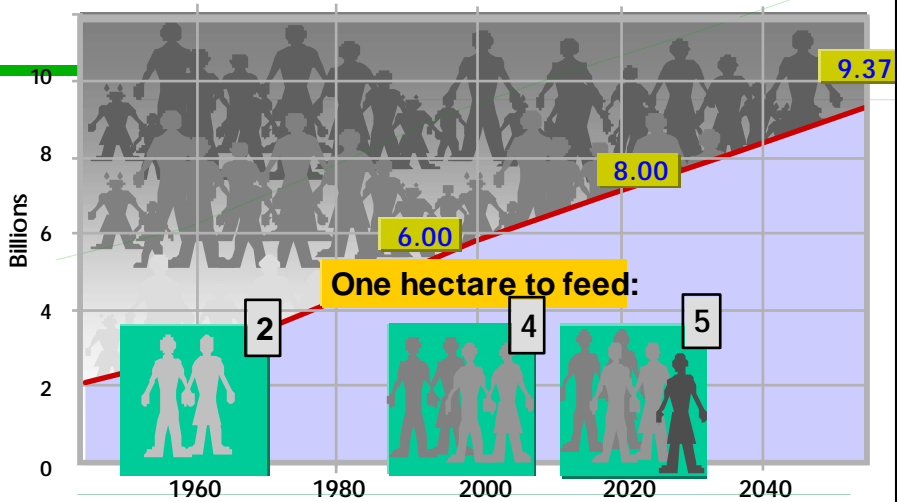
## Background

- Agricultural chemicals are used by millions of farmers in APEC countries
- Agricultural chemicals play an important role in sustainable agriculture by helping farmers increase their productivity, allowing more food to be produced on less land

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## Feeding a hungry world



Source: United Nations

## Safety in use is paramount

- Ensuring the safe and appropriate use of these products is essential and is the responsibility of industry, users and regulators
- Product labels are a primary means of communication on the safe and appropriate use of agricultural chemicals



## Agricultural chemicals are highly regulated

- Agricultural chemicals are subject to stringent national and international regulatory requirements

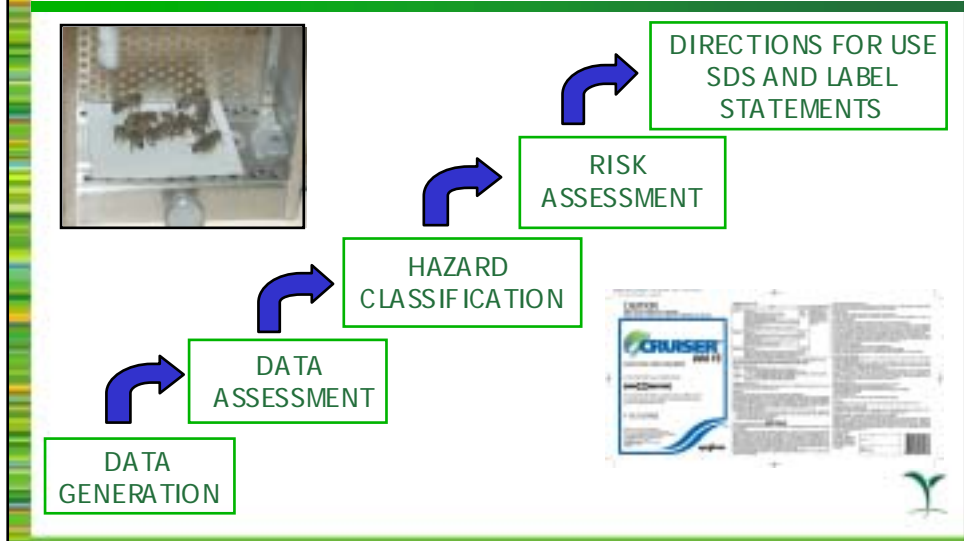


## Extensive data package

- Must submit data to demonstrate
  - efficacy
  - safety to humans (users, by-standers, food)
  - safety to environment

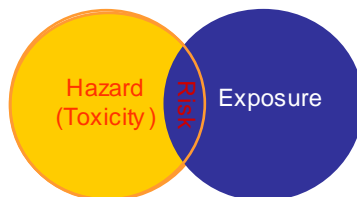


## Building a product label and SDS

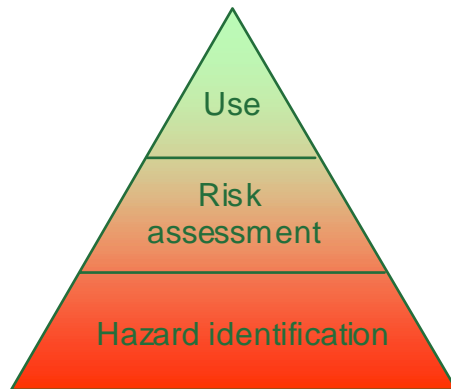


## Hazard vs. Risk

- **Hazard:** a situation that in particular circumstances can lead to harm
- **Risk:** the probability that a particular adverse event will occur during a stated period of time under specified conditions



## Hierarchy of control



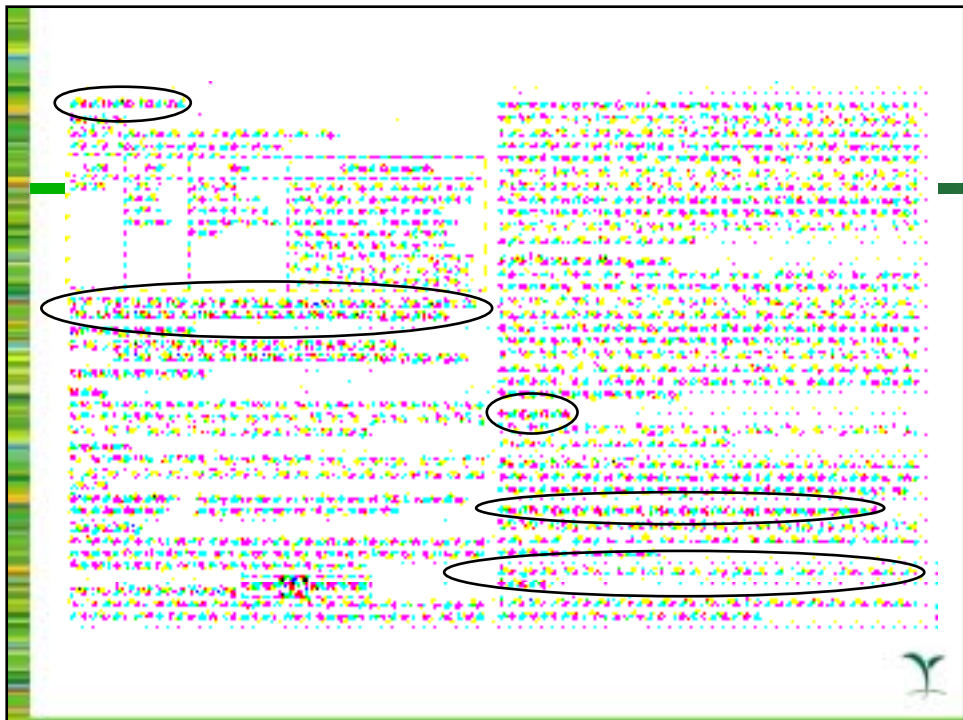
## Current labeling requirements

- Most countries have regulatory guidelines for labeling of agricultural chemicals
- Label wording must be consistent, clear and applicable to local use



# What information is currently on a label

- Agricultural chemical labels must include
  - signal headings
  - product name, active ingredient, net contents etc
  - directions for use of the product
  - precautionary statements, pictograms
  - protection statements (PPE)
  - safety directions and warnings
  - first aid statements
  - emergency information
  - storage and disposal information



### STORAGE AND DISPOSAL

Store in the closed, original container in a dry, cool, well ventilated area out of direct sunlight. Single rinse before disposal. Add rinsings to spray tank. DO NOT dispose of undiluted product on site. Puncture or shred and bury empty containers in a local authority landfill if no landfill is available, bury the containers below 500 mm in a disposal pit specifically marked and set up for this purpose clear of waterways, desirable vegetation and tree roots. Empty containers and product should not be burned.

Insecticide R  
For insecticide  
insecticide. 1

### SAFETY DIRECTIONS

Will irritate the eyes and skin. Avoid contact with eyes and skin. If product in eyes, wash it out immediately with water. When opening the container and preparing spray wear:

- cotton overalls buttoned to the neck and wrist and a washable hat,
- elbow-length PVC gloves and
- goggles

When using (except aerial spraying) the prepared spray, wear

- cotton overalls buttoned to the neck and wrist and a washable hat and
- elbow-length PVC gloves.

Wash hands after use. After each day's use, wash gloves, goggles and contaminated clothing.

### FIRST AID

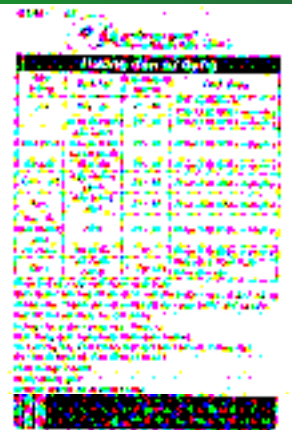
If poisoning occurs contact a doctor or Poisons Information Centre. Phone 131 125.

### MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEET

If additional hazard information is required refer to the Material Safety Data Sheet. For a copy telephone 1800 067 108 or visit our website at [www.syngenta.com.au](http://www.syngenta.com.au)



Gói 2g dùng cho bình 75 lít



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## GHS – how will it fit?

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- GHS provides an opportunity for harmonization of certain essential components of ALL chemical labels
- Will require the review of current labels and rationalization of requirements



## What is harmonization?

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“to be in agreement or accord in feeling or action”



## GHS – Implications

- Time and resources to classify and review under GHS
- Potential for conflicting information
- Potential for confusion of public/users
- Substantial cost to industry to reprint labels and Safety Data Sheets



## Examples of conflicting statements

Do not release to the environment	Product is an insecticide for release into crops
Do not allow product to enter rivers or waterways	May be used to control aquatic weeds
Highly toxic to bees	Approved for use on flowering crops



## Recommendations

- Implement only those aspects of GHS which are appropriate to agricultural chemicals
- Work with national pesticide authorities to ensure consistent messages
  - Hazard-based classification must be put into context based on risk from actual use
  - Labels must contain sensible instructions and non-conflicting statements



## Recommendations cont.

- Align with other guidelines such as FAO International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides
  - For example use of pictograms



## Recommendations cont.

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- FAO specifications should be used to determine similarity of products before extrapolating classification criteria from one product to another



## Recommendations cont.

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- Self-classification schemes should be considered
- Classification should be based on sound science and rigorous evaluation of data
- Classification must be translated into clear label statements via specific guidelines



## Recommendations cont.

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- Test data should be used in preference to extrapolation from other sources
- Intellectual property rights of data submitters must be respected



## Recommendations cont.

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- Allow suitable time for implementation and smooth transition to minimize excessive costs
- Countries should work together to ensure consistency, so as not to impede trade
- Appropriate and timely communication and training needed for users and public



## Conclusions

- GHS could be a positive step forward in globalization of regulations but must not undermine extensive risk assessment process by which agricultural chemicals are already regulated
- Both hazards and risks need to be evaluated and communicated clearly and appropriately to the user, without contradictions
- Governments are encouraged to work together to foster international harmonization

