

## Episode 2: The Label is the Law

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- Blake Moore: My name is Blake Moore, natural resources and horticulture agent.
- Dan Severson: Hey, I'm Dan Severson, Ag agent.
- Jake Jones: I'm Jake Jones, Kent County Ag agent.
- Katie Young: And I'm Katie Young, digital content specialist.
- Dan Severson: Welcome to the Extension302 podcast. We are dropping knowledge, keeping Extension real, reliable, and relevant. We have some exciting podcasts for you today, but first the crew would like to give you a brief update of how this virus, not to be mentioned or named, is affecting our work and the clientele we serve. So Blake, how's that happening for you?
- Blake Moore: Well, obviously we've had to migrate everything online. The Delaware master naturalists core training session, we had our first session ever on March 11th, and two days later, we ended up having to go and start moving things towards online. The class so far has been excellent, class response has been fantastic, they're really enjoying it. We will have to find some innovative ways to maybe do our field trip portions of it if the virus that should not be named continues to have us not meet in person.
- Blake Moore: But we're still available to help clientele with any plant diagnostic issues. Whether it's diseases, insects, plant identification, you can contact us through the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension website. And also there's a stormwater management series that we've been putting on, and it's also been very well received. So if you're looking for tips and techniques on how to better manage your clean water management areas, and your developments, tune in. We're still trying to reach you the best we can. We would love to be in the field, this is hard on us for not being able to visit you in the field. But we're still trying to get you that valuable information.
- Dan Severson: Jake, you're both a farmer and an extension agent. How's it working with you?
- Jake Jones: We got a new plant diagnostician during the middle of this pandemic, and she's going to put out a protocol on how to submit samples to the plant diagnostic clinic. And that will be available online on the UDel website as well. I've been catching up on writing, and I think I'm coming pretty productive at home. So, as far as farming, we didn't really have much effect yet on the work. We're a grain

operation. But commodity prices are starting to get a little volatile so hopefully that'll calm down.

Dan Severson: But you also wrote some beef first, right?

Jake Jones: Yep. We have some beef. Had a couple of babies or calves and they're all doing well, about to cut some hay. It's been a little tough with the weather lately to get any hay cut, but hopefully it'll clear up.

Dan Severson: It's been tough from my perspective of, as being an agent and a farmer is, I've been doing a lot phone work, calling farmers, farmers calling me. Being able to work remotely from home is a big, big thing right now because just think about it. We couldn't have done this before. That operation goes for farming, it doesn't stop. We're starting to chop small grain for silage. And like you said, I don't go out to a farm visit unless it's absolutely necessary. Some stuff you just can't troubleshoot over a phone. And that's where you have to make that decision. We're fortunate enough we're central employees, so we're able to go out and do that. So yeah, like Jake said, and Blake, thank goodness, we are able to put this online, being more productive. So since I'm not spending as much time out in the field. I'm able to do more of what I really love to do, paperwork. Yeah.

Blake Moore: It's also a time to read and reflect and, and increase our knowledge as well. You know what I mean? So it's kind of, I'm doing a little bit of independent study. You will find that continue to expand our value to our clientele.

Dan Severson: Face to face meetings are off until August 1st, I believe. Right? So this is going to be our normal, at least for the next couple of months.

Jake Jones: Yeah.

Blake Moore: Please contact us, let us know what you want to hear about. we're here for you to cover all topics, Extension. If there's something you want to know about, you want to hear about or someone you want to hear from, let us know.

Blake Moore: So today we have with us Kerry Richards, she serves as the part-time coordinator for the University of Delaware pesticides safety education program. For the past several years, she has served in this capacity in an effort to help restart the program, to provide educational materials and programs for pesticide applicators in Delaware, as the immediate past president of the American Association of Pesticide Safety Education, a former member and director of the Penn State Pesticide Education program Kerry's pesticide safety education experience provides a solid background in the development of educational materials, using a wide range of approaches to meet stakeholder needs. Kerry also works part time as the Education program developer for the National Pesticide Safety Education Center, ordinating the development of pesticide safety education materials and programs on a national level.

Dan Severson: So Dr. Richards, after that introduction from Blake, I feel like I'm not worthy to...

Kerry Richards: It means I'm old and I've been around a lot.

Dan Severson: Oh okay.

Kerry Richards: You know the farmers commercial where they say, "I know a thing or two, because I seen a thing or two"? That's me.

Dan Severson: Gotcha. So how do we know what PPE is required for the pesticide we're using? How do farmers or even homeowners know what's required?

Kerry Richards: Well, we've taught our applicators for years, read the pesticide label and truly that's how they know if they go to the precautionary statements section on a pesticide label, there is always a section for personal protective equipment, and it tells very specifically what personal protective equipment that needs to be worn. And what they need to realize is sometimes applicators require more personal protective equipment. Excuse me, let me say that again. Sometimes people who are mixing and loading the pesticides because they're using more concentrated products, need more personal protective equipment than the applicator does because by the time the applicator gets it, it's a end-used and usually about 90 to 95% water. So they need to look at all of the protective equipment requirements to find out what their needs are based on what they're doing. For example, there are products that only require gloves, long pants, long sleeve shirts and choose socks and boots as the basic personal protective equipment.

Kerry Richards: But then when you're working with concentrated products or some that are more toxic, you have to put on eye protection and respiratory protection. And that's true, not only for conventional pesticides, but even organic pesticides have those requirements. So you need to check no matter what kind of product you're using.

Dan Severson: So read the label, the label is the law.

Kerry Richards: Not only do we say read the label, but follow the label directions because you can read it. But if you don't look in the section that applies to you, for example, if you don't look as a mixer loader and you look at the applicator section, you might not see the exact pesticide protection that you need. But the big problem right now is that because of the coronavirus, and we've all seen this on the media due to the coronavirus, respirators are the biggest concern as far as what's going to be in short supply, especially in the next several months.

Kerry Richards: But some distributors that I've checked with are saying that they're not going to be able to guarantee supplies of N95 respirators until almost November or December. And the EPA has indicated that they're sticking with the label

directions for personal protective equipment requirements, because the Environmental Protection Agency, the EPA, makes those rules and approves those labels on a federal level and then hands the enforcement down to States, but that's going to remain the legal requirement. So if someone does something off pesticide label, technically it's a violation of the federal law.

Jake Jones: Wow. So all year, this year, all growing season, they're going to be a short supply of N95 masks we're expecting.

Kerry Richards: That's what everyone is saying. There are efforts on a national level, I'm involved in a couple of conversations on a national level to try and facilitate getting some of those supplies available to farmers. But honestly right now the medical community needs them the most. And so that's where those efforts are going to focus on. So we might have to look for some alternatives that will provide the protection that the farmers need. In the in the weekly crop update and the [inaudible 00:09:23] hotline, I'm going to provide updates as we know, and as they become available, if we find sources of personal protective equipment to help out.

Blake Moore: Thank you. It's the information out there is vast and there's a lot of places we can go to get information on pesticide use, on PPE use. So where are the best informational resources such as websites? Do you have any telephone numbers or any videos online that the industry can go to for the most up to date information on PPE and its availability?

Kerry Richards: I'm going to try and have a section put on fairly soon on the Delaware Pesticide Safety Education website that will link to all of those. But as far as respirators, the national organization I work with, we just put together an infographic. So it's kind of a decision making tree of does the label tell me, I need protective respirator, is it NIOSH approved, because that's also very important. A lot of these copycat respirators are not NIOSH approved. And if the label says it has to be NIOSH approved, you better make sure it is. And all of the process of going down through a decision making process, okay, I don't have this one. Are there alternatives? And so that decision making tree is on our NPSEC.us/respirators website, along with a lot of other information from State pesticide programs that's been developed.

Kerry Richards: So we don't have to duplicate those efforts, the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health NIOSH. We have a lot of links from NIOSH on there. There's a really good one from California, the California Pesticide Regulators that talks about alternatives, not only for respirators, but also other PPE. So all of those sites are there. And what we did was looked at those that are scientifically based and can give applicators really user-friendly information.

Blake Moore: Kerry, just for our listeners that aren't aware, can you just repeat what NIOSH is again?

- Kerry Richards: National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health. And we, we refer to the national organization that I work with as NPSEC, but it's the National Pesticide Safety Education Center. And one thing I did forget to mention is, one of the questions is, are there opportunities, are there alternative products, control methods that growers can use?
- Kerry Richards: There's a lot of alternatives. For example, if you normally use, I don't know if I'm supposed to say brand names, but if you normally use a Gramoxone based herbicide, it requires a respirator. Let me start that over. If you require a Paraquat based herbicide, it requires a respiratory protection. It's inexpensive, it works well, but it requires respiratory protection because of some of the potential health effects. So if you don't have a respirator, you can always go to Roundup. The concern I have is a lot of times that people think, "Oh, I'll just use organic products." Well, the organic product that a lot of people recommend instead of using either of those two other herbicides, not only requires respiratory protection, but it requires eye protection, whereas Roundup doesn't.
- Dan Severson: Yeah. I think you got into the question that I was going to ask is have farmers reached out to you as far as, seeking alternative products or alternative control methods that don't require PPE? I mean, you were going through all of this, and even water.
- Kerry Richards: Yeah.
- Dan Severson: Ingesting too much water at one time can cause death.
- Kerry Richards: Yeah. Well, and that's so true. And a classic example of that is a lot of years ago, when they first introduced a Nintendo Wii, it was a marketing genius because they released it two months before Christmas. And if you didn't get your kid a Wii for Christmas, you were the worst parent ever. And so they also reduced a limited supply, so it drove up demand obviously. And there was a radio. Everyone was trying to have all these, they were using it as ways to do promotions.
- Kerry Richards: And there was a radio station out in California. They had this contest called "Hold Your Wee for a Wii". And basically you drank water until you had to pee. And then you were out of the contest cause you couldn't hold your wee anymore. And the man who won, kids had a great Christmas, the second place person was a woman who not only did her kids not have a Wii for Christmas, they didn't have a mom anymore, because basically what happened is she drank so much water, it threw off the balance of the electrolytes in her system. And in essence, she internally drowned.

Blake Moore: I remember that very well. And that's a very good cautionary tale where it's, how very dangerous it can be. And even, it's exacerbated when you start adding in these chemicals that we're using in the industry.

Kerry Richards: Right. And my biggest thing, and I don't have anything against organics, don't get me wrong, but I think it's giving people a false sense of security, all these natural products, because I can say this to you guys. I was down in Maryland doing a presentation about exposure reduction. And I was talking about that your hands are the biggest area and all this blah, blah, blah. And I use Roundup as an example because some Roundup products don't even require gloves, which makes me crazy.

Kerry Richards: And people think that, "Oh, I'm using an organic or a naturally occurring, it's safer." And that's not the case. You still need to be cognizant about personal protective equipment. And the speaker after me got up and said, "Oh yeah, you know that Roundup they're talking about it causes cancer. So you should use more naturally occurring like Weed Farm." And I was speaking after her. So I'm in the back of the room, Googling Weed Farm. And the active ingredient is 20% acetic acid, which is in essence industrial grade vinegar. And so you need a respirator and eye protection for that, because if you splash it in your eyes, you'll burn your corneas out. And if you breathe it too deeply, you'll cause damage to your esophagus, but it's natural.

Jake Jones: So Dr. Richards, have you seen the PPA shortage effect pesticide application, so that would get into less pesticides being applied or alternatives like you were talking about earlier?

Kerry Richards: I haven't seen it yet because we're just starting in Delaware. We're just starting into the growing season. So there hasn't been a lot of application yet, but I know it's coming and that's my concern is I don't want to catch people off guard. I want them to be prepared. They probably have enough to do their first rounds, but when, for example, when the watermelon growers or when the vegetable growers get into the peak of the season, when they have to spray more because of the value of their crops and the potential pest pressure on those crops, that's when I think it's really going to hit hard and I just really want to alert people and be proactive instead of in the middle of the season saying, "Oh man, what do I do now?"

Blake Moore: Are a lot of these products, are they single use or are, can you reuse some of those? Or for instance, if something that is normally single use, can it be used again? Can it be reused if proper care is taken?

Kerry Richards: If you're using a filtering face piece, which is what people are typically seeing with the medical professional using the N95s, where it looks like a beating on your nose and your mouth with the metal piece that you make at the top, it forms a tighter fit. Those are the single use. It's the one, and I will send you

individual graphics, if you can use graphics in this, but if they're using a filtering face piece and N95, or any of those types, that is not reusable, they really should be thrown away after the first use. But if you're using a half face piece or a full face piece respirator, you can reuse that and just change out the filters. And under the EPA's guidance, you can use those filters for up to eight hours. So if you're in the field for only an hour and a half today, then you can use that filter again and again, until you reach that eight hour capacity for the filter.

Blake Moore: Great. You know, I'm really looking forward to getting back into the field and being able to do some work and things like that. When we get back into being able to meet personally, you see some classes that Delaware applicators can look forward to, what types of trainings can we look forward to?

Kerry Richards: Well, I think the first thing that I want to do when we're able to meet face to face is do a training on respiratory protection and talk about the different types that are available. It's been about three years ago in the fall of 2017, we did a respirator fit test training where people could come in and learn how to do the respirator fit test and all of the required steps of that that meets the OSHA and the worker protection guidelines. And I love to do one of those again, just to get folks up to speed, because you don't have to be a trained, certified technician or anything to do a respirator fit test. You just have to have the materials and the knowledge of how to do it correctly, to make sure that that respirator is appropriately fitting you and protecting you.

Blake Moore: That's great. I attended a workshop at the DNLA summer expo last year that you guys put on for sprayer calibration. I thought it was excellent. It was very, I've been, I've been applying for years and that was probably one of the better presentations I'd seen. You guys plan on doing more of those educational opportunities?

Kerry Richards: Actually, not only would I love to do more of those, but the gentleman who did that presentation for me, George Hamilton, from the New Hampshire Cooperative Extension came there specifically because we're working together on a Environmental Protection Agency Region 1 grant. And we had a video crew there that day that videotaped all of that. And then we went to Georgetown the next day and did a similar videotaping footage for a sprayer, a boom sprayer calibration. And we're working to put those together as tutorials that growers could use. Because a lot of times we do these meetings in the winter and they're there in January and we tell them all these things. And then in April, when they go out and they go to calibrate their spray, they're like, what, what did they say? And they can watch this video and just get that whole presentation all over again.

Blake Moore: That's awesome because I definitely would have forgotten between the winter and [inaudible 00:21:02] applying.

- Kerry Richards: Because that leads into another thing, another reason why Dan should go to the training that I'm helping the University of Hawaii and the Hawaii Department of Agriculture do in November and Robert, you probably would need to do this too. We're doing that, that respirator, train the trainer at that training at that Hawaii meeting also. And then we're going to go over to Maui the next day and work with Bayer CropSciences to actually do a field demonstration of both of those concepts for their growers.
- Blake Moore: Dan, Jake, you guys have anything else to add?
- Jake Jones: The only thing I wanted to say to Dr. Richards, is there any closing comments or remarks you'd like to throw out there?
- Kerry Richards: Well, the bottom line is what we say all the time. The label is the law, read the label so you can be prepared and know what protective equipment you need and order early. That's the real lesson with the shortage that we're facing right now.
- Blake Moore: Thanks so much for joining us today.
- Katie Young: This podcast is for educational purposes only. The views expressed by both guests and hosts are their own and their appearance on this program does not imply endorsement by the University of Delaware or UD Cooperative Extension. We hope you've enjoyed today's episode and we'll come back for more. In the meantime, please subscribe, visit us online at [UDEL.edu/extension](http://UDEL.edu/extension) and join us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram at UD Extension.
- Katie Young: This program is brought to you by the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension, a service of the UD College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, a Land-grant institution. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.
- Jake Jones: I said, Dan's the dangerous one.