

PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT FORM

TO: Participants

Plain Language Statement

Date: 13/05/2022

Full Project Title: Agricultural Chemical Use Mapping project

Principal Researcher: A/Prof Robert Faggian,

Student Researcher: N/A

Associate Researcher(s): Madeline Johnson, Prof Susan Brumby, Dr. Jacquie Cotton

Background & Purpose

This research project is seeking to better understand the distribution of agrichemicals and their use on Victorian farms. By mapping the use of particular agrichemicals, the research will provide a clearer picture for those working in and with the Victorian farming community, so ultimately farmers can continue using agrichemicals in the safest way possible.

We are inviting farmers and farm-workers to participate in this project via an anonymous 10 – 15 minute online survey. Your contribution and participation in this project will help inform a proactive approach to keeping farmers healthy and safe. This approach will likely include tailored education and initiatives, so farmers are supported to continue using agrichemicals on farm without putting their health or the health of others who live and work on farm at risk. Participation in this research project is voluntary. If you do not wish to take part, you are not obliged to. Choosing to not participate will not affect your relationship with the researchers, Deakin University or WorkSafe.

Deakin University's Centre for Regional and Rural Futures and the National Centre for Farmer Health are undertaking this research project funded by WorkSafe Victoria as chemicals are one of four focus areas in WorkSafe's Agriculture Strategy 2020-23. These focus areas were informed by external and internal stakeholder insights, data and workforce risk factors. Research results will be shared by the research team with other agricultural industry organisations to further support and

Methods

Your participation will involve filling out an online questionnaire that should take no more than *10 – 15 minutes*. It will cover general agrichemical use and hygiene or PPE practices and description of any injuries or illness experienced during the use of agrichemicals. All responses will be anonymous.

Should you wish to volunteer additional information, you can indicate that you would like to talk to a researcher in a short one-on-one interview, lasting approximately *10-15 minutes*. This may be conducted over the phone or using video technology (eg. Zoom). You may decide to stop the interview at any point. You may also ask up to the time of publication, that any information collected at your interview be destroyed and not used for the research. Interview questions will cover broad topics including Attitudes, Barriers to Change and Risk Perception.

We wish to audio record the interview. If you do not wish this to occur, we will take handwritten notes of the interview. The audio will be transcribed by hand and all audio recording deleted. To comply with government requirements, all transcribed data will be stored securely for a period of a minimum of 6 years after final publication. It will then be destroyed.

This project will take place over May 2022 – Aug 2022.

Risks and Benefits

There may be some benefits of participating in the project, such as you may like the opportunity to share your experiences and reflect.

There are no readily foreseeable risks associated with your participation in this project. You may also withdraw from this project altogether.

This project will determine the extent to which Victorian farmers are using and applying agrichemicals in Victoria, whether or not injury has been experienced, and the impact this may have on attitudes towards handling and applying agrichemicals. In addition, this project aims to record and map the locations at which agrichemicals are being used, and will obtain an insight into the types of agrichemicals being used in the past 12 months, use of personal protection when handling and applying agrichemicals, and how farmers assess risks associated with their use. It is hoped that this research will address knowledge gaps in the field and further support and inform the health and safety information, resources and initiatives that are available for the farming community.

While it is not expected that participating in the research will cause you to feel distress, we recognise a) that recalling workplace injuries and accidents could cause emotional distress and b) the challenging circumstances the COVID-19 pandemic has caused for many community members. As such, we would like to highlight that if you, or those close to you are experiencing distress, or are in need of additional support, you are encouraged to contact:

Beyond Blue - Call 1300 22 4636

Lifeline – Call 13 11 14

Suicide Call Back Service – Call 1300 659 467

Headspace – Call 1800 650 890

Kids Helpline - Call 1800 55 1800

Confidentiality

Your data will be made **non-identifiable** and will remain so for the duration of this project.

All responses will be kept confidential and anonymity assured. During the survey, if you provide your contact details because you wish to be interviewed, these will be linked to your survey responses, only for the purpose of guiding the interview questions, they will then be unlinked. Interview data will be stored securely and separately from your contact details. Information will remain confidential as a National Centre for Farmer Health (NCFH) and record with Deakin University. Information collected as part of this project will remain responsibility of Deakin University and will not be deleted until 6 years after the last occasion on which WDHS provided a service. All information will be **non-identifiable**. No identifying information will be used in reporting your results. Data will be secured in a secure, locked and password protected location at Deakin University. Only researchers will have access to your information/data. Data will be stored for 6 years after final publication and then destroyed through deletion of computer files.

Publication

Your information will be **non-identifiable**. No identifying information will be used in reporting your results. If you agree, you will be notified of the outcome of the research via email research updates and a final report. A physical copy of the report may be sent out, along with a publication in the stakeholder newsletters and updates on social media. This project may be presented as information to government and industry groups and publication in peer reviewed academic journals. Neither of these works will contain personally identifying information.

Should any problems arise, researchers involved will report such events or outcomes promptly to Deakin University and its ethical review body.

Should you wish to follow up on any of the findings of this research, please contact the Principal Researcher (Associate Professor Robert Faggian).

Participation

Participation in this research project is voluntary. **If you do not wish to take part, you are not obliged to.** Should you decide to take part and then change your mind, you are free to withdraw without giving a reason. This may be done via mail, telephone or email. This applies to the survey and any subsequent interviews of those that wish to provide additional information. Once you have read this form and agree to participate, please agree to proceed to the survey questions, this will signify consent. Please note anonymous survey data can only be withdrawn by not submitting

the survey. You may keep a copy of this form.

Ethical Consideration

Approval to undertake this research project has been given by the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Built Environment Human Ethics Advisory Group. If you require further information or if you have problems concerning this project, you can contact either of the principal researchers. Researchers responsible for this project include A/Prof Robert Faggian and Dr Jacquie Cotton.

Project Funding

This research is part of a project that is funded by WorkSafe Victoria. The project has received \$171,000 in funding.

Complaints

If you have any complaints about any aspect of the project, the way it is being conducted or any questions about your rights as a research participant, then you may contact:

The Human Research Ethics Office, Deakin University, 221 Burwood Highway, Burwood Victoria 3125, Telephone: +61 3 9251 7129, research-ethics@deakin.edu.au

Please quote project number SEBE-2021-72

Further Information

If you have any questions, please contact:

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Yours Sincerely,



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