

# Making a Difference

## 2016 Pesticide Applicator Programming in Wharton County

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### Relevance

For year 2016, Wharton County, Texas has 623 pesticide applicators licensed with the Texas Department of Agriculture. Private Pesticide Applicators are required to obtain fifteen (15) CEUs (continued education credits) every five years in order to renew their license. Commercial and Non-Commercial Applicators are required to obtain 5 CEUs every year in order to renew their license. There is a substantial audience and a need for Extension to provide the educational opportunities for these applicators to obtain their CEU credits. In addition, new applicators seek opportunities throughout the year to take the certification course at the Wharton County Extension Office to obtain their license.

### Response

The Wharton County Row Crops Committee provided for one (1) individual course in 2016 that offered five (5) CEUs. The committee planned and conducted this event based on client need and evaluation results from the 2015 Conference. This 5-CEU Pesticide Recertification Conference is scheduled each year at the Wharton County Youth Fair grounds in Crescent. CEUs were also awarded at the following seminars and workshops scheduled throughout the year: January 14, 2016 Upper Gulf Coast Feed Grain and Cotton Conference; January 19, 2016 Grain Handlers Conference; January 20, 2016 Western Rice Belt Conference; February 4, 2016 5-CEU Conference; March 24, 2016 Spring Beef and Forage Seminar; April 7, 2016 Wheat Field Day; June 9, 2016 Remote Crop Sensing Seminar; August 12, 2016 Cotton Defoliation Turn Row Meeting ; and at seed meetings and/or field days for Simplot®, Crop Production Service; Agricumbia Resources, Bayer Crop Science®, Pioneer Seed®/Kresta Farms, and Krenek Seed Company. CEU credits are also made available to pesticide applicators by viewing a series of Last Chance CEU videos at the Wharton County Extension Office.

The mandatory Certification Training for potential pesticide applicators to obtain their pesticide applicator license was provided by the Wharton County Extension Office throughout the year.

### Results

**Ten (10)** new applicators attended the Private Pesticide Applicator training and testing sessions offered at the Wharton County Extension Office in the year 2016.

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For year 2016 (reporting January 1 – September 1), Wharton County awarded a total of **21.5 CEUs** at group meetings to a total of **535** individuals. In addition to CEUs obtained at group meetings, a total of fifteen (**15**) licensed Pesticide Applicators obtained at total of **90** hours of CEU credits by viewing our Last Chance CEU videos at the Wharton County Extension Office.

A retrospective-post evaluation instrument was provided to a representative sample of 40 of the 100 pesticide applicators who attended the February 4, 2016, 5-CEU Pesticide Recertification Conference. For 2016, an online evaluation instrument was utilized and produced through Qualtrics. The evaluation instrument was emailed five months following the conference. **10 of 40 (25%)** completed the Qualtrics, electronic evaluation. An online evaluation instrument was selected over an “in person” instrument to better measure practices adopted rather than intent to adopt.

**Knowledge Level Mean Change measured using an online, Qualtrics retrospective post evaluation**

<b>TOPICS</b>	<b>Mean Value BEFORE</b>	<b>Mean Value AFTER</b>	<b>Mean Change</b>	<b>Percent Increase</b>
Understanding of pesticide labels and labeling	2.90	3.70	0.80	27.5%
Selection of spray nozzles to minimize drift potential	2.50	3.40	0.90	36%
Right Of Way vegetation management in Texas	2.20	3.30	1.1	50%
Key destructive insect pests in Wharton County	2.60	3.60	1.0	38%
Knowledge of TDA's new requirement that a signed supervision affidavit or signed label must accompany pesticide records when a pesticide license holder supervises the use of a restricted use pesticide by a non-licensed person	2.10	3.60	1.5	71%

- **9 of 10 (90%)** adopted best practices
- **6 Of 10 (60%)** estimate an economic impact
- Respondents report a total of **3,340** acres managed

**Economic Impact:** The anticipated economic impact to clientele of the Annual 5-CEU Pesticide Recertification Conference = \$24,747.85

<b>Educational Outreach Efforts</b>	<b># of Contacts</b>
8 Ag Monday Radio Programs on KULP, AM 1390	16,000
4 Electronic Newsletters	1,578
4 Newspaper Articles	40,316