



Protected Agriculture Stewardship (PAS) Standards

Backgrounder: June 29, 2023

Why was the standard developed?

The [2016 Proposed Re-evaluation Decision by PMRA \(PRVD2016-20\) for Imidacloprid](#) raised water quality concerns related to greenhouse product use. As a result, a group of impacted stakeholders agreed to work towards the development of a credible protected agriculture pesticide lifecycle stewardship program. The approach focuses on adherence to a national standard that supports compliance with registered pesticide label directions and the mitigation of risks associated with crop protection tools, fostering the health and safety of people and the environment.

Who was involved?

The Standards were drafted by a multi-stakeholder committee including CropLife Canada and its members in collaboration with both provincial and federal grower groups. Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) acted in an advisory capacity to guide development of the standards.

Who does the standard apply to?

Protected Agriculture (PA) refers to crops that are grown under structures such as greenhouses, shade houses, high tunnels, warehouses, etc. Crops grown using these systems include fruit, vegetables, flowers and other commercial crops (e.g., mushrooms, cannabis). The trigger for registration is the purchase of PCP registered products labelled for greenhouse use. All other PCP products are out of scope for this phase of implementation. All PA operations, of any crop, using closed-loop chemigation systems must be certified under the standard. These operations are defined as Category 1. A closed system is one where any excess chemigation liquid delivered to the crop is captured via trough, drainage tile, or other similar conveyance system, rather than allowed to percolate into the ground. Warehouse production structures and freight container growing operations with no subterranean plumbing and continuous flooring are excluded from category 1 but included in Category 2. All other PA operations (Category 2) must complete a self-declaration waiver that states they fall outside of Category 1. One of these two documents must be presented to their ag-retailer in order to purchase the aforementioned products.

What does the standard cover?

The [Standard](#) consists of auditable protocols to assist PA operators in the identification and mitigation of risks associated with pesticide application with the longer-term goal of continuous environmental, health and safety improvement. The standard consists of both mandatory and recommended protocols.

- Completion of Section C is a mandatory requirement for PAS certification. There are four protocols which cover assessment, monitoring, maintenance and emergency response related to the closed recirculation system.



- Facilities completing Sections A (Pesticide Handling, Storage & Training), B (Pesticide Application), D (Site Management) and E (Emergency Response) will be awarded a Certificate of Excellence (COE). These additional protocols represent industry best practices and, in some instances, are legal requirements. We encourage all growers to review these additional protocols and consider participating in the COE component as a demonstration of your commitment to workplace excellence. CropLife Canada is offering an incentive to any operation completing the full audit (both the PAS Certification and COE components) by Dec 31, 2023. Please see the PAS website for more details.

The full standard, compliance assistance manuals, templates and equivalency guidance can be found on the [PAS website](#). PAS Compliance is attained by successfully passing Section C. Any deficiencies noted during the audit/assessment will be identified to the operator as corrective actions. There is no penalty for failing a protocol but PAS certification will not be granted until the corrective actions are completed.

When is certification required?

For this industry-led stewardship program, all PA operators must be certified or have completed their self-declaration waiver by **Jan 1, 2024** in order to purchase PCP registered products labelled for greenhouse use.

In addition, there is a legally binding label requirement for the use of imidacloprid as follows:

Greenhouse uses (soil drench, transplant tray plug drench) are permitted to continue provided that measures are in place to prevent releases, effluent or runoff from greenhouses containing this product from entering lakes, streams, ponds, or other waters. In addition, greenhouses using closed recirculation system (for example, closed chemigation system), the following is required:

- *a third-party audit that validates the facility's closed recirculation system and other measures are sufficient to prevent releases, effluent or runoff containing this product from entering lakes, streams, ponds, or other waters.*

This came into effect **May 19, 2023**.

How to get started?

All PA operations should register on the [PAS website](#) to receive the welcome package and be assigned an auditor. The auditor will work with them to find a mutually agreeable time to deliver the audit. The following QR code can also be used to reach the registration site.

