



For Immediate Release

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Weed Science Society of America Asks EPA to Pursue a Rehearing of Recent Court Decision on Pesticides

§ *Sixth District ruling threatens to override current science-based regulations*

(LAWRENCE, Kansas) — This week the Weed Science Society of America (WSSA) is asking the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to request a rehearing of the recent Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals decision defining pesticides as pollutants and requiring Clean Water Act permits before they can be applied in or near water sources. The Court's ruling overrides existing government regulations for pesticides that are based on extensive scientific analysis.

Currently the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) requires all pesticides marketed in the U.S. to be assessed for potential risks to both people and the environment. These scientific risk analyses determine which products are registered for use and how registered products are to be applied. No one may sell, distribute or use a pesticide unless it is registered by the EPA under FIFRA. The Clean Water Act permitting process mandated by the Court of Appeals, however, would in effect supersede FIFRA analyses.

More than 60 years after FIFRA was enacted, it remains a significant government success story – resulting in new weed control strategies and safer products that are far more precise and benign to the environment than ever before. Crop yields have soared, tillage and erosion have plummeted, and millions of acres of natural habitats have been protected for future generations.

“As a nonprofit professional society devoted to the scientific study of weeds, we fully support government regulation of pesticide use,” said Lee Van Wychen, science policy director for the WSSA. “But the new permitting system mandated by the Sixth District Court of Appeals overrides FIFRA without offering any additional protection. It places an unnecessary, unfunded burden on states, growers, homeowners and applicators and will discourage the timely and effective management of invasive plants and weeds. We strongly urge the EPA to file a petition for rehearing before the Court's April 9 deadline.”

About the Weed Science Society of America

The Weed Science Society of America, a nonprofit professional society, was founded in 1956 to encourage and promote the development of knowledge concerning weeds and their impact on the environment. The Weed Science Society of America promotes research, education and extension outreach activities related to weeds, provides science-based information to the public and policy makers, and fosters awareness of weeds and their impacts on managed and natural ecosystems. For more information, visit www.wssa.net.

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