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Ohio State University Extension Vegetable Crops  
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#### California Limits Hand Weeding

Source: IPMnet Newsletter #130 and Dr. Andy Wyenandt, Rutgers Univ.

In a first-of-its-kind move, regulators in the U.S. state of California recently approved a temporary ban on the physically demanding practices of hand weeding, hand thinning, or similar hand operations in most commercial crops, operations that were deemed to place workers at "substantial risk of back injuries."

The state's Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board issued an official finding "of emergency" to "prevent back injuries and related injuries to employees by prohibiting unnecessary" hand operations. A farm workers representative was quoted as calling the Board's action "a modest step to ban a practice that should never have existed in the first place."

Establishment of the temporary rule, with a permanent rule anticipated within the next year, resulted from nearly a decade of contentious dialog between growers, especially of organic crops, and farm workers. In 1975 California banned use of short-handle implements that required users to bend or stoop for long periods while weeding. Two previous legislative initiatives to ban hand weeding and thinning failed because affected parties could not agree on the proposed terms and language.

Based on input from an advisory committee of grower and labor representatives, as well as medical advice, the Board issued a 10-page finding (<http://www.dir.ca.gov/oshsb/handweeding0.htm>) that, while aimed at protecting worker health, incorporates numerous exemptions and special conditions. Organic operations are exempt, as are high density plantings and seedling crops, and crops grown in tubs or planters where a long handled tool is unsuitable. Hand operations are permitted if growers can justify that other means of weeding are unsuitable. Occasional or intermittent hand operations are permitted if performed by workers no more than 20 percent of the time during any one week period.

Additionally, workers engaged in hand operations now must be given training in methods to prevent injury, and must be provided with gloves and knee pads, as necessary, along with being allowed additional periods of paid rest time during hand operations.

Eml: <mailto:oshsb@dir.ca.gov>.

excerpted with thanks from the Board's website, and from reports by the Associated Press and Reuters.

### Work Efficiency Tools for Vegetable Growers

(From: University of Wisconsin's Healthy Farmers, Healthy Profits Project)

Shorter days and frosts bring a quick end to the vegetable growing season. Thinking about all those projects you have planned for this winter. Here is a University of Wisconsin website where you can get more ideas to add to your list of projects.

Background (From the Website) The Healthy Farmers, Healthy Profits Project is a team of researchers and outreach specialists who find and share work efficiency methods that improve health, safety and profits for nursery growers, dairy, fresh market vegetable, and berry farmers. We have been working with dairy farmers since 1994, vegetable farmers since 1996, berry farmers since 1999, and nursery growers since 2003.

Goal Our goal is to help farmers prevent pain and injury so they can keep farming, perform daily household tasks, and enjoy life. We also try to promote cost effective solutions that farmers will adopt. We find new tools or methods that create a safer, more profitable work place.

Below is a list of the Vegetable Tip Sheets that can be found at the website. Slide shows, Berry projects, related links and background on the researchers and staff can also be found at the website.

#### Vegetable Tip Sheets

Packing shed layout pdf (50K) | html (8K)

Streamline your sales area pdf (59K) | html (11K)

Mesh produce bags: Easy batch processing pdf (63K) | html (7K)

A strap-on stool for field work pdf (68K) | html (12K)

Standard containers pdf (64K) | html (8K)

Try a long handled diamond hoe for weeding pdf (50K) | html (11K)

A rolling dibble marker for easy transplant spacing pdf (94K) | html (9K)

Build a hands-free washer pdf (116K) | html (9K)

A specialized harvest cart for greens pdf (110K) | html (11K)

Plans for a specialized harvest cart html (37K)

Roll produce on a narrow aisle platform truck pdf (62K) | html (12K)

Narrow aisle platform truck schematic drawings html (2K)

Narrow pallet system pdf (64K) | html (10K)

Motorized lay-down work carts pdf (68K) | html (11K)  
Stretch out your season with hoopouses pdf (77K) | html (10K)  
Postharvest Handling for Best Crop Quality html (16K)

The Univ. of WIs Healthy Farmers, Healthy Profits Project website can be found at:  
<http://bse.wisc.edu/hfhp/backgroundpage.htm>

#### Weed Control in Green Onions (From Doug Doohan)

We have also been informed that the EPA expects to complete the Section 3 (Federal) label for Outlook on green and dry bulb onions in the last quarter of 2004. Assuming this occurs the Section 3 label will supersede all Section 18s.

#### Minor Use Pesticide Issues (From Doug Doohan)

Wondering what new and upcoming minor use pesticides are in the works? Check out IR 4 program on the Internet at ([http://ir4.rutgers.edu/Food\\_Use.cfm](http://ir4.rutgers.edu/Food_Use.cfm)). This will address will take you directly to the database of current research projects or projects that may be funded in the future. By searching according to crop group and pesticide class (eg fungicides) you can quickly see all projects and determine if they were a 2003 Category A (ie they were funded in 2003), a Category B (probably not funded in 2003) or a Category C project. Anyone can request that a project be moved forward to a Category A (funded) project. The more who ask for a particular project, the more likely it will be prioritized for funding. Individuals can also complete an online Pesticide Clearance Request (PCR) at the IR 4 website. Doing this will get a new pesticide or a new use for a registered pesticide into the IR 4 database; the first step in moving towards a funded project.

#### Section 18 Labels

Growers who require Section 18 or Section 24C labels for their file can obtain them as downloads from the OSUE Pesticide Education website: <http://pested.osu.edu>

#### PROPOSED SECTION 18 REFORMS (From Pep-Talk, October)

EPA has issued a proposed rule to streamline the application and review process for pesticide emergency exemptions. The proposed revisions would allow applicants for emergency exemptions to generally re-certify that emergency conditions continue in the second and third years for certain repeat requests. This way the requesting state or federal agency will not have to submit full renewal applications. Also, the revision would use a loss-based approach to substantiate the significance of economic losses and adjust the data requirements for documenting the loss.

The proposed reforms are currently under a public comment period that closes on November 2, 2004. For more information, visit <http://www.epa.gov/fedrgstr/EPA-PEST/2004/September/Day-03/p20038.htm>  
(Source: U.S. EPA website and AAPSE news)

## 2, 4-D DOESN'T CAUSE CANCER (From Pep-Talk. October)

In June, EPA released the draft health and environmental risk assessment (PEP Talk - July 2004) for the reregistration of the herbicide 2, 4-D.

In the risk assessment, EPA concluded the 2,4-D would not exceed the Agency's level of concern and based on the review of the 2,4-D studies, the Health Effects Division concluded that there is no additional evidence that 2,4-D causes cancer.

A 2,4-D industry task force has compiled research information on 2,4-D that is available on their web site at <http://www.24d.org> The website chronicles studies on the widely-used herbicide as well as provide information on the registration process of the product. (Source: Chemically Speaking, July, 2004)