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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ANNOUNCES SENSITIVE CROP REGISTRY

NASHVILLE – Commissioner of Agriculture Jai Templeton is encouraging Tennesseans with apiaries and commercially grown crops sensitive to pesticides to register their locations using the online program, FieldWatch, Inc.

Purdue University developed FieldWatch in collaboration with agricultural stakeholders. The registry streamlines communication between producers and pesticide applicators to help protect sensitive crops and apiaries from unintended pesticide exposure.

In October, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced new label requirements for the pesticides Engenia, XtendiMax and FeXapan, which included the provision that pesticide applicators consult a sensitive crop registry prior to applying these new formulations of dicamba products.

The FieldWatch registry offers two online platforms. DriftWatch is for producers of commercially grown crops sensitive to pesticides and includes the ability to map boundaries around production fields. BeeCheck is a registry site for beekeepers that designates one-mile radius boundaries around apiaries. Producers of commercially grown sensitive crops who also manage apiaries may enter hive locations using either DriftWatch or BeeCheck. The registry will be offered at no cost to participating farmers and will be available online by March 29, 2018.

“Communication among producers and pesticide applicators is vital to ensuring a successful harvest for everyone,” Commissioner Templeton said. “Applicators need to know the locations of sensitive sites so that they can take steps to avoid pesticide impact. This new registry will improve that communication, helping Tennessee maintain its reputation as a prime location for all types of agriculture.”

Along with apiary sites, the registry also includes commercial vineyards of a half-acre or larger, orchards, fruit and vegetable grow sites, nursery tobacco and Christmas tree production sites, and certified organic crops.

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“We worked hard to identify a suitable registry for Tennessee’s cotton and soybean farmers so that they can comply with label requirements,” Templeton said. “Based on our research, FieldWatch offers us an established program that is already being used by 18 other states. We are pleased to offer this technology to farmers in Tennessee.”

To access DriftWatch and BeeCheck, visit www.fieldwatch.com. The website offers detailed instructions to sign up and use the mapping tools.

The Tennessee Department of Agriculture’s mission is to promote wise use of our agricultural and forest resources, develop economic opportunities, and ensure safe and dependable food and fiber for the citizens of Tennessee. For more information, visit www.tn.gov/agriculture.

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