



Florida Cooperative Extension Service

## **Farmers and the Law<sup>1</sup>**

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The use of agricultural chemicals is subject to extensive regulation at every level of government. At least six federal statutes, numerous amendments, and countless administrative regulations address every aspect of their use, from manufacture and distribution to storage, application and disposal. State and local environmental and land use laws also regulate how agricultural chemicals may be used. Many of these regulations carry civil and criminal penalties. In addition to this extensive mass of regulations, a farmer may also be subject to a lawsuit if persons or property are harmed by the farmer's use of pesticides.

Farmers can avoid violating these laws while protecting human health and environment by exercising care and common sense in the use of agricultural chemicals and through familiarity with the law.

Farmers and others with questions concerning their agrichemical operations can turn to numerous sources for answers. Federal, state, and local environmental or agricultural agencies, the Cooperative Extension Service, and private agricultural associations, may serve as excellent sources of information. Private attorneys specializing in environmental or agricultural law and environmental and agricultural consulting firms are also useful sources in addressing specific concerns.

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1. This document was published 11/91 as Fact Sheet FRE-79, Florida Cooperative Extension Service. For more information, contact your county Cooperative Extension Service office.
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