



**Comments from the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association  
in support of the amended version of  
LD 356 - *An Act to Require Notification of Certain Outdoor Pesticide Applications*  
March 6, 2025**

On behalf of the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA) I am submitting comments in support of the amended version of LD 356 - *An Act to Require Notification of Certain Outdoor Pesticide Applications*, which directs the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Board of Pesticides to review and amend rules on the placement of pesticidal baits, including, but not limited to rodenticidal baits, and to review and amend portions of Chapter 28: Notification Provisions for Outdoor Pesticide Applications in order to require notification of property owners in the vicinity of pesticidal baits.

A broad-based community, MOFGA is transforming our food system by supporting farmers, empowering people to feed their communities, and advocating for an organic future. MOFGA certifies 537 organic farms and processing operations representing more than \$120 million in sales. We're working hard to create opportunities for Maine's next generation of farmers. Each of these farmers is a Maine businessperson for whom economic health and environmental health are interdependent. While MOFGA envisions a future of healthy ecosystems, communities, people, and economies sustained by the practices of organic agriculture, we attribute our success to collaboration and outreach to growers across the management spectrum.

Generally, we feel there is a need for greater public education about managing rodents and that better cultural practices and non-toxic, mechanical approaches should be prioritized over harmful chemicals that pose a threat to the health of humans, pets, livestock and wildlife. Commonly used rodent baits are designed to promote internal bleeding and prevent clotting, cause swelling of the nervous system, damage kidneys, calcify soft tissue, promote dehydration, and irritate the digestive system.

MOFGA has engaged in many pesticide application notification initiatives for decades, and I have come before this committee and Maine's Board of Pesticides Control (BPC) countless times advocating for the public's right to know about nearby applications of harmful chemicals to which they could be exposed. Though the topic hasn't been front and center for several years in the Legislature, MOFGA has maintained that Maine should embrace technology, and reinstate and improve a simple though comprehensive outdoor pesticide application notification system.

We feel that a centralized, automated geographic information system, tied to an email or text notification system will minimize any burdens on land managers applying pesticides outdoors, and will facilitate distribution of information to concerned citizens living near intended pesticide application areas. We once had such an effective, low-cost, online notification system that focused on powered and aerial pesticide applications but the Legislature mothballed it putting pesticide industry interests over the public's right to know.

Communicating effectively and consistently is important. We hope that the BPC could facilitate the communication by hosting a mandatory registry for pesticide users to report intended applications. Neighbors could opt-in to the registry and be notified through the system. This wouldn't preclude neighbor to neighbor discussions, it would simply allow for consistent information to be shared in a timely and effective manner. This would also help Maine gather information about the volume of and types of pesticides that are being applied to address insect and disease pressures on the land. Thank you for your consideration.

