

Pesticide application by drones



Health Canada regulates pesticide application methods under the *Pest Control Products Act (PCPA)*, including aerial pesticide application by drones.

Drone: a special aircraft

Transport Canada regulations consider drones to be aircraft. However, when registering pesticides, Health Canada distinguishes drones from aircraft as they present distinct features, such as a lower load capacity and flight time, access to remote sites or crops on wet soil, different risks of exposure for the person handling the pesticide and to the environment.

As a result, the use of drones for pesticide application is subject to its own Health Canada efficacy and risk assessment, specific to this type of equipment. Drone application can only appear on product labels once the risks and value have been considered acceptable by Health Canada.

Conditions of use

Registered application method

The application of a pesticide by drone requires that this method of application to be approved for this given pesticide. The label must include the directions for drone use, including any limitations on its use and procedures to reduce risks associated with drone application.

Labels of products registered for drone application bear the words “Remotely Piloted Aircraft System” or “RPAS”. If these terms do not appear on the pesticide label, the use of drones for pesticide application **is not allowed** under the PCPA.

Certified user

To use drones for pesticide application, pilots must meet all applicable federal regulatory requirements. All drone users must obtain a drone pilot certificate from Transport Canada.

Provinces and territories may also require training and certification specific to the application of pesticides using drones.

Examples of pesticide label statements registered for drone application

- Apply only by fixed-wing, rotary aircraft or RPAS (Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems) equipment that has been functionally and operationally calibrated for the atmospheric conditions of the area and the application rates and conditions of this label.
- RPAS pilots must operate in compliance with Part IX of the Canadian Aviation Regulations (SOR/96-433).

Users must follow the instructions on the updated labels.
Using a pesticide contrary to the label directions is a violation of
the *Pest Control Products Act*.

Read and follow the label

All pesticides registered in Canada have a Health Canada-approved label with a registration number. Read the pesticide label carefully, as it contains specific information on how to use it.

To find the most up-to-date label, use our online [label search tool](#), or search for “Health Canada pesticide labels” using your favourite search engine.

For more information

Information note regarding the [use of drones when applying pesticides](#). *The information note is the official Health Canada document. In the event of any discrepancy with the content of this factsheet, the content of the information note shall prevail.*

Health Canada's Pesticide Compliance Program (PCP) is responsible for enforcing the *Pest Control Products Act*. Visit: canada.ca/pesticide-compliance