



# COLORADO ENVIRONMENTAL PESTICIDE EDUCATION PROGRAM

Pesticide Factsheet # 427  
CEPEP 05/04  
Updated 6/06

## Harvest Is. . .

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This fact sheet describes the EPA's definition of harvest.

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## Harvest Is. . . .

### Harvest

This factsheet is going to explore the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) definition of "harvest" as it pertains to pesticide usage and preharvest intervals (PHI). The pesticide label is **the law** (see Pesticide Fact Sheet [The Pesticide Label](#)) and because of this it is important to look at the EPA's definition of PHI because it often differs from what the producer thinks it is. Confusion arises with crops that are cut (grass, alfalfa) or dug from the ground when green and then allowed to dry in the field before being gathered (onions, potatoes).

### Harvest

- Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines harvest as the following:
  1. (noun)—"the act or process of gathering a crop"
  2. (verb)—"to gather in (a crop)"
  3. (verb)—"reap"

### Reap

- Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines reap as:
  1. (verb)—"to cut with a sickle, scythe or reaping machine"
  2. **EPA's POSITION**
- EPA defines harvest by the term "reap". Reap is defined by cutting of the crop, or when the plant "ceases to be a living growing organism"

### Preharvest Interval

Pesticide labels refer to a Preharvest Interval (PHI).

- Same thing as Days to Harvest
- Period of time after the application of a pesticide to a crop during which harvest of that crop is prohibited
- Necessary to ensure that the crop will meet the established pesticide residue tolerances (see definitions below)



### Pesticide residue

Substance (s) which remains in or on a feed or food commodity, soil, air or water following use of a pesticide

### Tolerance

Maximum concentration of a residue that is legally permitted or recognized as acceptable in, or on, a food, agricultural commodity or animal feedstuff as set by EPA

## **Other Intervals**

- *Pregrazing interval* may be included on pesticides with a pasture label
  - This is the minimum amount of time between the last application of a pesticide and grazing with livestock
- *Preslaughter intervals* (PSI's) are expressed similar to PHI's
  - Minimum permissible time between final application of a pesticide to an animal and slaughter for human consumption

According to the EPA's memo regarding the definition of harvest, for many crops, the label should be interpreted as "interval to cutting".

- Harvest is considered to be the cutting or picking of the crop
- For such crops EPA still considers harvest to be the cutting of the plant or the digging from the ground
- This is the cutting or picking of the crop, NOT the gathering or removal from the field



**Always READ and FOLLOW the label directions!**

## **References and Resources**

Definition of "Harvest". United States Environmental Protection Agency, Policy Memo #46. February 3, 1999.

Label Review Manual 3rd Edition. United States Environmental Protection Agency.

<http://www.epa.gov/oppfead1/labeling/lrm/>

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