

IFCA 2020 Dicamba Recordkeeping Recommendations and Compliance Clarifications

May 5, 2020

In 2019, the Illinois Department of Agriculture received a record number of pesticide misuse complaints, including more than 700 that were dicamba related. Many of those complaints resulted in the issuance of monetary penalties to the applicator, in the amount of \$750 or \$1,000. The misuse findings were split fairly evenly between commercial applicators and private applicators.

IFCA provides the following recommendations to help you avoid the most common mistakes that occurred in 2019, particularly with recordkeeping.

Note: All records related to dicamba application to soybean must be recorded within 72 hours of the application. Make sure that none of the 22 items required to be recorded are left blank. Recordkeeping forms are available at <https://ifca.com/IllinoisDicambaTraining/Resources>

- 1. Wind speed and direction records:** The dicamba labels require the applicator to record the wind speed and wind direction in the field of application, at boom height, at the start and finish of the application.

Recommendation on recording wind speed & direction: In the field of application, stand at the boom and acquire the GIS coordinates on your phone, other device, or app. Take a screen shot or photo of the GIS coordinates and the start time of the application. Using a hand-held anemometer, take a photo of the wind speed and direction on the anemometer at the start of the application. Follow the same procedure at the completion of the application. You should also monitor wind speed, direction and gusts during the application; taking a photo of the wind readings in the middle of the application can also greatly strengthen your record of application.

- 2. Failure to adequately document buffers (downwind and omni-directional):** Applicators must always maintain a 110 or 220 foot buffer when applying these products, from the downwind outer edges of the field. You must document how you implemented the 110 or 220 foot downwind buffer, depending on which product you use and the rate of application. In counties with endangered species, you must also document the 57-foot omni-directional buffer to the other three sides of the field. A map of the endangered species counties is available [here](#).

Recommendation on documenting buffers: Draw a map or print a map of the field of application. The map or drawing should include all adjacent fields or areas on all sides of the field of application. If sensitive soybean or another sensitive crop isn't adjacent but is nearby, you should document the location of those fields as well. On the map, indicate (draw) where you left the down-wind buffer and write down what you used as the buffer. **For example:** There is a mowed grass area and then a corn field downwind. Indicate (draw on the map) what portion of these non-sensitive areas (in this case the managed grass area and corn field) you utilized as the downwind buffer. Other items that could constitute the buffer include roads, mowed and managed ditches, Xtend soybeans, unplanted fields and footprints of buildings (see the labels). If you had to leave an in-field buffer in the Xtend soybean field you must indicate (draw or highlight) the portion of the Xtend field in which you applied the buffer.

For fields in endangered species omni-directional buffer counties, you must document the downwind buffer and you must also always document what exists on all other sides of the field. Trees, pastures, bodies of water, natural areas, un-mowed ditches and un-mowed grassy areas are all considered sensitive areas. If any of these areas exist within 57 feet of the edge of the field, you must draw and designate on the map what the areas are and how you implemented the 57-foot edge of field buffer on the three sides that are not the downwind sides of the field. Draw on the map what you used as the omni-directional buffer (i.e. in-field buffer, mowed areas next to the field, road next to the field, etc.).

- 3. Consulting and documenting sensitive crop registries and DNR areas:** The labels require you consult a sensitive crop registry. In Illinois that registry is FieldWatch (<https://fieldwatch.com/>). You must document the date you consulted the registry and what you determined from the website in reference to the field of application. ALSO, the Illinois Special Local Needs label requires you to determine if IL Dept of Natural Resources Nature Preserve Commission sites are nearby and protect them as you would a residential area if they are downwind. You can identify and download the coordinates of DNR Nature Preserve Commission sites at either of these sites:

<https://idnr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=8217cd3aa26a40f2b8b1c123bd4b0cea>.

https://ifca.com/DNR_NPS

The important thing is to document the date in which you checked these registries and what you learned as a result, in terms of the location of sensitive crops and DNR sites to the intended field of application. The date and your findings must be in the record of application.

- 4. Records should be condensed and in one recordkeeping form if possible.** If IDA requests to review your records of application, when you submit your records to IDA they must be complete. If additional documents are attached (such as maps or load-out tickets) it is helpful to not have to look at multiple documents in order to piece together the 22 required elements.
We recommend you have the 22 items documented in a single document (record) of application. Supporting documents such as maps or narrative descriptions of buffers can accompany the main recordkeeping form.

- 5. Documenting the 85 degree temperature restriction:** In 2020, the Illinois Special Local Needs label requires you to check the forecasted high temperature for the field of application at <https://www.weather.gov/>. You can check the forecast up to 24 hours ahead of an intended application. If the forecast high for the zip code in the town where the field is located is 86 degrees or higher, it is a DO NOT SPRAY day. If the forecasted high is less than 86 degrees, you can spray but must also take the in-field temperature at the time of application and if it happens to be 86 degrees at the time of application, you cannot spray. **In all cases, print the screen of the weather forecast site for any day you apply dicamba and keep it in your record of application. Also take a photo of the temperature reading (from your phone or sprayer monitor) at the beginning and end of the application and keep it with your records.**

- 6. Adhere to the cut-off dates:** There are three cut-off dates for dicamba application, and WHICHEVER COMES FIRST, you must comply with these cut-off requirements:
- a. No more than 45 days after planting
 - b. Not beyond the R1 stage of growth (the Tavium label states not beyond V4)
 - c. Not after June 20, 2020
- 7. Other considerations:** One of the most common questions IFCA receives is “how many violations can an applicator receive before their license is suspended or revoked?”

There is no specific number of violations that trigger a suspension or revocation. The Illinois Pesticide Act authorizes the Director of IDA to modify, suspend or revoke any license after an opportunity for an administrative hearing. The Director is also authorized to suspend any license before a hearing when it is in the interest of the people of the State of Illinois.

Be advised that spraying after the cut-off date could be considered cause for license suspension.

Another common question is whether IDA is required to find fault if dicamba symptomology is present. Again, each case is different. The Pesticide Act establishes point values for Use and Violation criteria. The Act also establishes what administrative actions or monetary penalties must be imposed based on those point values. Bear in mind that the majority of pesticide labels declare that it is the applicator’s responsibility to comply with the label requirements and avoid drift.

If you have any questions regarding compliance with the dicamba labels and recordkeeping, please contact IFCA. Feel free to share this guidance document with your farmer customers.

Dicamba labels including the Special Local Needs labels, recordkeeping forms and other helpful resources can be downloaded at <https://ifca.com/IllinoisDicambaTraining/Resources>.

IDA provides dicamba guidance at <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/agr/Pesticides/Pages/Dicamba.aspx>.



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