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Wednesday, 12/21/2011 7:00 pm

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Pesticide advocate takes story to task

Published: December 21, 2011 8:00 AM

To the editor:

I am responding to your page A16, headlined Province polls public on pesticide use, in the Nov. 30 edition of the Free Press.

We agree people should provide their input on the consultations taking place in British Columbia, but it's important readers have all the facts, so they can make up their own mind on the issue, especially since a recent article in the Free Press contained a significant amount of misinformation about the safety of pesticides that must be corrected.

Pesticides help protect valuable green spaces from insect, weed and disease infestations.

What readers should know is that before any pesticide can be sold in Canada, it must undergo a rigorous scientific review and risk assessment by Health Canada.

In addition to a comprehensive set of over 200 tests, Health Canada also reviews all additional scientifically credible studies that exist. As part of its safety assessment, Health Canada specifically takes into consideration all demographics of the population before approving a product for use.

Through this process, pesticides receive a greater breadth of scrutiny than any other regulated product and only those products that meet Health Canada's strict health and safety standards are registered for sale and use.

B.C. may want to seriously look at the consequences the Ontario pesticide ban has started to take, including illegal pesticide use, loss of green space and increased municipal maintenance costs as part of their consultation process.

The fact of the matter is a provincial ban of pesticide use in B.C. would prevent residents from using safe and effective tools, approved by Health Canada, to protect their personal property from insect, weed and disease infestations.

Pesticides can be safely used and Canadians should feel comfortable if they choose to use them.

Lorne Hepworth, president

CropLife Canada

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