



Protected Agriculture Stewardship (PAS) Standards

Backgrounder: September 25, 2023

Why was the standard developed?

The [2016 Proposed Re-evaluation Decision by PMRA \(PRVD2016-20\) for Imidacloprid](#) raised water quality concerns related to greenhouse product use. As a result, a group of impacted stakeholders agreed to work towards the development of a credible protected agriculture pesticide lifecycle stewardship program. The approach focuses on adherence to a national standard that supports compliance with registered pesticide label directions and the mitigation of risks associated with crop protection tools, fostering the health and safety of people and the environment.

Who was involved?

The Standards were drafted by a multi-stakeholder committee including CropLife Canada and its members in collaboration with both provincial and federal grower groups. Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) acted in an advisory capacity to guide development of the standards.

Who does the standard apply to?

Protected Agriculture (PA) refers to crops that are grown under structures such as greenhouses, shade houses, high tunnels, warehouses, etc. Crops grown using these systems include fruit, vegetables, flowers and other commercial crops (e.g., mushrooms, cannabis). The trigger for registration is the purchase of PCP registered products labelled for greenhouse use by a protected agriculture operator. All other PCP products are out of scope for this phase of implementation. All PA operations, of any crop, using closed-loop chemigation systems must be certified under the standard. These operations are defined as Category 1. A closed system is one where any excess chemigation liquid delivered to the crop is captured via trough, drainage tile, or other similar conveyance system, rather than allowed to percolate into the ground. Warehouse production structures and freight container growing operations with no subterranean plumbing and continuous flooring are excluded from Category 1 but included in Category 2. All other PA operations (Category 2) must complete a self-declaration waiver that states they fall outside of Category 1. One of these two documents must be presented to their ag-retailer in order to purchase the aforementioned products.

What does the standard cover?

The [Standard](#) consists of auditable protocols to assist PA operators in the identification and mitigation of risks associated with pesticide application with the longer-term goal of continuous environmental, health and safety improvement. The standard consists of both mandatory and recommended protocols.

- Completion of Section C is a mandatory requirement for Basic Certification. There are four protocols which cover assessment, monitoring, maintenance and emergency response related to the closed recirculation system.



- Facilities completing Sections A (Pesticide Handling, Storage & Training), B (Pesticide Application), D (Site Management) and E (Emergency Response) will be awarded a Certificate of Excellence (COE). These additional protocols represent industry best practices and, in some instances, are legal requirements. We encourage all growers to review these additional protocols and consider participating in the COE component as a demonstration of your commitment to workplace excellence. CropLife Canada is offering an incentive to any operation completing the full audit (both the Basic Certification and COE components) by Dec 31, 2023. Please see the PAS website for more details.

The full standard, compliance assistance manuals, templates and equivalency guidance can be found on the [PAS website](#). Compliance is attained by successfully passing Section C. Any deficiencies noted during the audit/assessment will be identified to the operator as corrective actions. There is no penalty for failing a protocol but certification will not be granted until the corrective actions are completed.

When is the deadline?

For this industry-led stewardship program, all PA operators must be registered under the program by **December 31, 2023** in order to purchase PCP registered products labelled for greenhouse use in 2024. See the attached Path to Registration document for further details on the process.

In addition, there is a legally binding label requirement for the use of imidacloprid as follows:

Greenhouse uses (soil drench, transplant tray plug drench) are permitted to continue provided that measures are in place to prevent releases, effluent or runoff from greenhouses containing this product from entering lakes, streams, ponds, or other waters. In addition, greenhouses using closed recirculation system (for example, closed chemigation system), the following is required:

- *a third-party audit that validates the facility's closed recirculation system and other measures are sufficient to prevent releases, effluent or runoff containing this product from entering lakes, streams, ponds, or other waters.*

This came into effect **May 19, 2023**.

How to get started?

All PA operations should register on the [PAS website](#) to receive the welcome package and be assigned an auditor. The auditor will work with them to find a mutually agreeable time to deliver the audit. The following QR code can also be used to reach the registration site.



Protected Agriculture Stewardship Standards Program Getting Started

The Protected Agriculture Stewardship Standards program was established to assist protected agriculture operators in the identification and mitigation of risks associated with pesticide application with the longer-term goal of continuous environmental, health and safety improvement.

Who do the Standards apply to?

The standards apply to all Protected Agriculture operators in Canada using PCP products labelled for greenhouse use. Protected Agriculture (PA) refers to crops that are grown under structures such as greenhouses, shade houses, hoop houses, high tunnels, warehouses, etc.

What steps do Protected Agriculture Operators need to take?

A:	Do you use PCP Products labelled for greenhouse use? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If not, no action necessary. • If yes, continue 	
B:	Determine which Category your operation is	
	<p style="text-align: center;">Category 1 PA Operator (CAT1)</p> <p>Protected Ag Operators using any closed loop irrigation/chemigation systems are referred to as Category 1 PA Operators. A closed loop system is one where any excess irrigation/chemigation liquid delivered to the crop is captured via trough, drainage tile, or other similar conveyance system.</p> <p>This includes operations that use both closed loop and other irrigation systems.</p> <p>Note: Warehouse production structures and freight container growing operations with no subterranean plumbing and have continuous flooring are excluded from Category 1.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Category 2 PA Operator (CAT2)</p> <p>Protected Ag Operators not using closed loop irrigation/chemigation systems are referred to as Category 2 PA Operators.</p>

C:	Register as either CAT 1 or CAT2 site (visit awsa.ca) before December 31, 2023	
	<p style="text-align: center;">Category 1 PA Operator (CAT1)</p> <p>All Category 1 PA Operators must register before December 31, 2023. Once registered, a Temporary PAS Certificate will be issued. These Temporary PAS Certificates will expire on June 30, 2024.</p> <p>Category 1 PA Operators will be required to present this Temporary PAS Certificate to their suppliers in order to be eligible to receive shipments of PCP products labelled for greenhouse use in 2024.</p> <p>Category 1 PA Operators will also be assigned an Auditor to assist with the certification process.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Category 2 PA Operator (CAT2)</p> <p>All Category 2PA Operators must register to complete a Declaration of CAT2 PAS Operation Waiver declaring they are Category 2.</p> <p>This must be completed by December 31, 2023 in order to be eligible to purchase and receive PCP products labelled for greenhouse use in 2024. This waiver must be provided to your supplier of PCP product in 2024.</p>
	CAT2 Sites Complete	
D:	<p>CAT1 Site – Audited and Certified before June 30, 2024</p> <p>The Temporary PAS Certificates will expire on June 30, 2024. PA 1 Operators will require a complete certificate after June 30, 2024 to receive shipments of PCP products labelled for greenhouse use.</p> <p>The PAS Standards consist of mandatory and optional protocols. Please visit the Resources section for a copy of the Protocol Manual. In consultation with your auditor, choose Basic Certification or Certificate of Excellence Certification.</p>	
	Basic Certification	Certificate of Excellence Certification
	<p>For basic certification all Category 1 PA Operators must be audited and pass Section C. In Section C there are four protocols which cover water management assessment and system monitoring.</p> <p>PA1 Operators awarded Basic Certification by June 30, 2024, will be eligible to continue to receive shipments of PCP products labelled for greenhouse use.</p>	<p>Operators can also achieve a Certificate of Excellence (COE) which demonstrates a commitment to workplace excellence. To achieve COE status, in addition to section C, operators must also be audited for compliance with sections A (Pesticide Handling, Storage & Training), B (Pesticide Application), D (Site Management) and E (Emergency Response) of the Standards.</p> <p>PA 1 Operators awarded a Certificate of Excellence by June 30, 2024, will be eligible to continue to receive shipments of PCP products labelled for greenhouse use.</p>