

## **RPA Guidance – Use of chemicals on allotments**

### **Considerations** before using chemicals on the allotment

- Consider non-chemical methods to control pests, weeds and diseases. Cultivation techniques such as rotation of crops or hand removal; biological controls and encouraging natural enemies can reduce or eliminate the need for spraying.
- Pesticides, Herbicides (weed killers) and Inorganic Fertilisers are all chemicals that might be considered for use on allotments. While these can be helpful when clearing and cultivating an allotment, they can also be hazardous and have environmental implications.
- Try to minimise the use of chemicals, and reduce the level of use over time. If weed killer is used for initial clearance, it should not be necessary to use it subsequently on a regular basis. Small patches of weed can be cleared by digging.

### **Selection** if a chemical solution is still chosen after due consideration

- Identify the problem correctly in order to apply appropriate control
- Use only garden chemicals available for purchase at a normal retail outlet and intended for domestic use.
- Only buy the amount you need for the job.  
For small areas consider 'Ready to Use' products which are already diluted for use.

### **Use** – safety and impact on others is of utmost importance

- Always read the label carefully and use according to instructions.
- Wear suitable protective clothing and gloves when using pesticides or fertilisers.
- Always apply the correct dose as explained on the label.
- Only use on the area, or plants, where a problem is identified.
- Only make up the amount you need. Use a secondary container such as a bucket or watering can to fill a sprayer or watering can containing chemicals.
- Use the same method to rinse the container after use and dispose of the rinsing's on an unused area of your own plot.
- Spray in the early morning or early evening when bees are not active, and in calm conditions to avoid spray drift. Any wind may carry the spray considerable distances and damage neighbour plots plants.
- Make sure no-one is nearby when spraying.

### **Storage**

- Do not purchase large amounts and minimise chemicals to be stored.
- Store product in a secure place beyond the reach of children and animals, keeping it tightly closed in its original container.
- Chemicals should never be decanted into another container.

### **Disposal**

- Old chemicals and their containers must be disposed of off-site
- Dispose of unwanted or out-of-date pesticides by taking them to a manned local authority household waste site