



FARMER GUIDELINES



DECONTAMINATING SPRAY TANKS WITH ALKALI & DISPOSING OF RINSATE AND RINSE WATER

March 2023



PREVENT CROSS-CONTAMINATION OF SPRAY MIXTURES

1. It is possible that small quantities of pesticides remain in spray tanks after spraying that may contaminate follow-up spray mixtures with dire consequences for crop safety.
2. Cross contamination of spray mixtures may also cause failure of pesticides to perform as expected.
3. Application equipment (spray equipment) must be thoroughly rinsed and decontaminated after each application, especially after herbicides were applied.
4. Visual inspection after rinsing and decontamination is important to check for any residual precipitates that may be present in filters or sieves after rinsing and decontamination.
5. Always wear protective clothing when working with rinsing (cleaning) agents.



BEST PRACTICE FOR CLEANING SPRAY TANKS

Spray tanks must be thoroughly cleaned (decontaminated) after spraying to prevent contamination of the new batch of spray mixture. It may require using a tank cleaning (rinse) agent, 5% sodium hypochlorite solution or a 20% aqueous ammonia solution especially after using hormonal herbicides.

- Ensure the spray tank is totally empty by spraying the last spray mixture out on the crop field in fallow areas. *Do not spray over crops* that have already been treated as overdosing will result in resistance development.
- Add the required rinse agent according to its label instructions or if sodium hypochlorite is used, dilute 1 liter 5% sodium hypochlorite in 100 liters fresh water as rinse agent. If ammonia is recommended on the product label as tank cleaning agent, follow those instructions; it is usually 1 litre aqueous ammonia per 100 liters water.
- Spray over the entire inner surface of the spray tank and leave for one hour.
- Neutralise with acetic acid, dilute two-fold and irrigate over fallow soil in a crop field.
- Rinse the spray tank properly with fresh water and spray the rinsate over fallow soil in a crop field.
- Repeat the rinse with fresh water twice and spray the rinsate over fallow soil in a crop field.

ESSENTIAL MAINTENANCE AFTER CLEANING SPRAY TANKS

- Check all pipes for leaks and repair/replace if necessary.
- Check all valves for leaks, lubricate and repair/replace if necessary.
- Check pressure gauges and repair/replace if necessary.
- Check nozzles, unblock if necessary and replace if worn out.
- Check seals for leaks, lubricate and repair/replace if necessary.

CALIBRATE THE APPLICATION EQUIPMENT AT LEAST ONCE PER SEASON TO ENSURE THAT THE CORRECT DOSAGE IS APPLIED ACCORDING TO EVERY PESTICIDE'S LABEL INSTRUCTIONS. CALIBRATION IS AS MUCH PART OF MAINTENANCE AS SERVICING IS.

