



## Graziers urged to use herbicide cautiously

Queensland grain and cattle producers will need to abide by new rules for the commonly used herbicide diuron until March next year.

AgForce president Brent Finlay said the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicine Authority has been reviewing diuron since 2002 and has decided to permit restricted use of the chemical while it considers new information contained in public submissions.

“Industry supports APVMA’s scientific approach to risk-based assessment for herbicides. The interim suspension with limited use is until March 2012 to provide more time for APVMA to consider all the new information submitted by industry and agribusinesses during the review period,” Mr Finlay said.

Despite the interim suspension order still being in place, Mr Finlay said graziers can continue to control prickly acacia and mimosa bush in western bore drains, and grain growers can still apply diuron to grain crops.

A few years ago, diuron was blamed for mangrove and seagrass dieback along the Queensland coast. Research later uncovered the cause of the dieback was due to flooding and burial of the aerial mangrove roots by sediment.

“AgForce is disappointed to see the environment movement continuing to make these claims despite science since proving these claims to be false.

“The diuron review has scientifically demonstrated that it is not a risk to coastal waters including reef waters.

“With new technology and expertise, farmers use spot spraying and target spraying techniques rather than broad spraying. This lowers the actual product rate per hectare considerably.”

“There is immense pressure on government and community by World Wildlife Fund and National Toxics Network to ban 80 pesticides in Australia, including diuron. This is why it is so important to have an independent and scientific regulatory body such as APVMA to manage the use of pesticides and sort through the facts versus false claims.”

As with any herbicide there are risks, and to the APVMA’s credit these new guidelines aim to minimise these and AgForce agrees it is important for broadacre producers to understand and work within the new guidelines for use.

“We encourage landholders to go to the APVMA’s website and review the new guidelines for use and for any other information related to diuron,” Mr Finlay said.

Visit [www.apvma.gov.au](http://www.apvma.gov.au) to find out more.

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**Who is AgForce?** AgForce represents thousands of Queensland broadacre producers who recognise the value in having a strong voice. AgForce leads the way to ensure agriculture’s social, economic and environmental contribution is recognised by all levels of government. AgForce works alongside landholders, encourages and supports the next generation, builds industry partnerships and skills and promotes agriculture - for secure, sustainable, progressive and profitable food and fibre into the future.