



**Environment Committee  
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**Public Hearing  
Testimony  
By**

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Co-Chairs, Ranking Members, and Members of the Environment Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on *House Bill 5480, An Act Requiring an Assessment of the Use of Certain Pesticides at the University of Connecticut Research Farm*.

The UConn Plant Science Research and Education Facility located two miles south of the Storrs campus has served as the primary research, education, and outreach facility for the plant sciences for almost 100 years. Currently more than \$2 million in externally funded research is conducted on the 153 acre site on an annual basis. Most of the research is closely aligned with addressing the needs of the plant industry in Connecticut including ornamentals and nursery crops, fruit and vegetable production, turfgrass management and field crop production. The facility serves as a learning laboratory for a wide range of plant science courses that provides students with a hands-on learning experience. Each year, the facility hosts a number of educational events that address the needs of the general public as well as professional groups.

Our research spans the breadth of plant agriculture including organic, low input sustainable systems as well as high input systems and is funded from a wide range of external sources including federal funding agencies, public agencies, foundations and private businesses. Our research focuses on developing best management practices for plant related agriculture, investigation of new technology before it enters the marketplace and the exploration and development of new technology to improve production. For producers, we serve as a source of research-based information on best management practices. Reflective of agriculture, a portion of our research includes the use pesticides as well as alternative control strategies. Of the 153 acres, approximately, 40 acres is under active cultivation with about 20 acres receiving any pesticide application. Our research normally utilizes small plots such that our use of pesticides is limited to small amounts.

As a publicly supported institution, UConn should serve as an example for land stewardship and safe use of pesticides whether for use in research or for maintenance of the facility. We recognize our need to hold to the highest standards. Therefore, UConn has greatly exceeded any statutory requirements for record keeping, reporting and monitoring supported by a thorough study of the drainage, soil characteristics and hydrology. UConn has established monitoring wells at the downslope margin of the property which are tested for nitrates and an extensive list of pesticides annually. By federal law, UConn cannot test any pesticides that have not been specifically permitted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Although we believe we have all appropriate procedures and protocols in place, we would invite the appropriate state agencies to review our procedures and monitoring system and make any appropriate recommendations. We see no need for specific legislation to require such an assessment.