



Frequently Asked Questions: General

What is FieldWatch?

FieldWatch, Inc. is a non-profit company created to develop and expand the operation of the DriftWatch Specialty Crop Site, BeeCheck Apiary, CropCheck Row Crop, SeedFieldCheck and FieldCheck registries. To support the rapid growth of DriftWatch outside of Indiana, Purdue University collaborated with other agricultural stakeholder groups in the creation of a non-profit corporation called FieldWatch in December 2012.

What is DriftWatch?

DriftWatch is a voluntary online specialty crop site registry and mapping program created by the Purdue Agriculture and Biological Engineering Department and currently managed and operated by the non-profit company FieldWatch. The stewardship tool allows for improved communication and collaboration between producers of specialty crops and pesticide applicators using a technology platform where producers can map their sites and provide contact information to pesticide applicators through an online mapping system. As primary stakeholders, the respective state departments of agriculture provide key leadership roles in implementing, administering and financially supporting this unique and effective stewardship collaboration tool.

What is BeeCheck?

BeeCheck is a voluntary online beehive/apiary registry and mapping program that is managed and operated by the non-profit company FieldWatch. The stewardship tool allows for improved communication and collaboration between beekeepers and pesticide applicators using a technology platform where beekeepers to map their sites and provide contact information to applicators through an online mapping system. As primary stakeholders, the respective state departments of agriculture provide key leadership roles in implementing, administering and financially supporting this unique and effective stewardship collaboration tool.

What is CropCheck?

Crop is a voluntary online row crop registry that was piloted in Arkansas in 2018. It is now used in multiple states since 2019. CropCheck identifies and maps four crops (soybeans, corn, rice, and cotton) and their tolerances. The registry and mapping program that is managed and operated by the non-profit company FieldWatch. The stewardship tool allows for improved communication and collaboration between row crops growers and pesticide applicators using a technology platform where crop producers map their sites and provide contact information to applicators through an online mapping system. As primary stakeholder, the respective state departments of agriculture provide key leadership roles in implementing, administering and financially supporting this unique and effective stewardship collaboration tool.

What is the difference between FieldWatch and DriftWatch/BeeCheck/CropCheck?

FieldWatch is a non-profit company. DriftWatch, BeeCheck and CropCheck are the online mapping registries operated and managed by FieldWatch.

How do DriftWatch, BeeCheck, and CropCheck work?

Commercial producers of high-value specialty crops, such as tomatoes, fruit trees, grapes and vegetables, register and map their sites online with an easy-to-use mapping tool and provide contact information about their operation. Likewise, in BeeCheck, beekeepers (commercial and hobbyist) register and map their hives the same way. CropCheck allows producers of sensitive row crops to be mapped and viewed. Pesticide applicators access the site to help determine the scope and location of specialty crops, row crops and beehives in their trade areas. Registered applicators can sign up to receive email notifications when new crop fields or beehives are added to their designated state, county or area. DriftWatch, BeeCheck, and CropCheck provide the platform to facilitate increased awareness, communication and interaction between all parties as one part of ongoing stewardship activities.

Who can use DriftWatch?

DriftWatch is free and voluntary to use. The locations are viewable by the public, but not just anyone can register specialty crop sites or fields. The tool is for use by specialty crop producers, beekeepers and pesticide applicators (Note: Users with only beehives should use BeeCheck however if producers of specialty crops also have beehives, they can map their hives in DriftWatch). Only managers and owners of specialty crop fields that are used for commercial production and are of at least a half-acre will have fields approved by the state data steward. DriftWatch is not intended for homeowners.

Who can use BeeCheck?

BeeCheck is free and the site locations are viewable by the public. In most states, beekeepers can mark their hives “private” so that only pesticide applicators who are registered with FieldWatch can view their sites (not the public). BeeCheck users can be commercial beekeepers or hobbyists.

Who can use CropCheck?

CropCheck is free and the site locations are viewable by the public. CropCheck is currently available in Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and North Carolina.

What is the difference between a “user” of FieldWatch stewardship tools and a “member” of FieldWatch?

We are a non-profit company that relies on financial contributions and sponsors to support the ongoing operations and continued innovation of our stewardship tools. As a user of the system, it is FREE for producers and beekeepers to input and manage the data related to their operation and it is also FREE for our end-users, the applicators, to access the data. However, we encourage our users to become voluntary, dues-paying members if they would like to support the continued innovation and operation of FieldWatch. The voluntary membership is a means to generate revenue from companies, organizations and individuals that want to get involved and demonstrate their support of our stewardship tool. Please see our FieldWatch Membership Guide for information on member benefits and how you can support FieldWatch!

Are the DriftWatch, BeeCheck, and CropCheck tools free to use?

YES. All registries are free to use and free for applicators to access. FieldWatch has implemented a voluntary membership structure as a means of raising funds to support the operation and continued innovation of our tools. If you wish to join as a FieldWatch member, there is a fee structure associated with membership, however, the registries are free to use regardless of whether users choose to join FieldWatch as member or not.

Which states are part of the FieldWatch registries?

FieldWatch is currently operating in 22 states and one Canadian province: Arkansas, California, Colorado, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, Wisconsin and the Canadian province of Saskatchewan. Please see our “FieldWatch Registries” page for a full map.

What types of memberships are available?

Thank you for your interest in becoming a member of FieldWatch! Please click on our current Membership Guide for more information on how you can get involved!

How can I participate in FieldWatch if my state has not implemented the program yet?

We are currently in the process of trying to expand our geographic footprint and have active conversations in several states. However, we can use your help in spreading the word about the importance of voluntary stewardship tools like FieldWatch with key stakeholders in your state. These

conversations go a long way in creating momentum for a state to become involved and join the registry. It may be beneficial for individuals and grower/applicator groups to contact their state department of agriculture or university extension service indicating the desire and need for such a program in their state. Please see our “Resources” page for more information to assist in your outreach and please do not hesitate to reach out to FieldWatch – we welcome the opportunity to speak to stakeholders as well! Contact: Info@FieldWatch.com or (877) 443 – 4353.

What is a data steward?

Each FieldWatch state has a primary data steward and in all states to date, that person is employed with the state's department of agriculture or university extension service. The data stewards provide a key leadership role in implementing and administering the FieldWatch tools. When you register with FieldWatch, your state data steward will receive your request. He or she will either approve or deny this request based on the scope criteria as defined on our Resources page. If problems arise while using the registry, your state data steward can offer assistance or direct you to someone who can answer your question.

FAQs for DriftWatch, BeeCheck, & CropCheck Users

What happens if I am not very good with a computer?

If you don't have a computer or are unsure of how to operate the FieldWatch website, please contact your state's data steward who will be able to help in creating an account and mapping your fields. We welcome users without email or computer access to identify and map their crops and apiaries. You can find the contact information for your state's data steward on our "Contact Us" page.

What do I do if I don't have an email address?

To become a FieldWatch user, it is convenient to have an active and current email address. It's easier and more efficient to contact users via email. We understand that some users may not have an active email account. In these cases, communications can be made through the user's phone number or address. Please contact your state data steward or county extension agent for more information. You can locate their contact information on the “Contact Us” page.

If I have problems mapping my fields, who should I contact?

There are state-specific data stewards identified on the FieldWatch website. In addition, we have detailed Users Guides under the Resources tab for your use. If you have trouble with mapping your fields, you may contact your state's data steward and they can help you. You can also send an email to info@fieldwatch.com.

Can anyone put in a crop site or beehive?

No. In order to map a specialty crop site (and get it approved) in DriftWatch, you must be producing the crop for commercial use. The site is not intended for homeowners who have small gardens. In order to become a producer and map your sensitive areas, you must have a commercial site that is at least a half-acre. For BeeCheck, in most states, you can use the site if you are a commercial or hobby beekeeper. For CropCheck, users must be growing a commercial row crop that is sensitive to off target movement of chemicals.

Can I register my apiaries if I am not a commercial beekeeper or produce honey for commercial use?

Yes. Each state is different on how they address hobby beekeepers. Most states will approve apiaries that do not produce for commercial purposes. If you are a hobby beekeeper and are concerned with getting your sites approved, contact your state's data steward by clicking on our "Contact Us" page.

What are the requirements for mapping my beehives?

We ask that beekeepers map the specific location of each of their apiaries. Apiary locations are identified with a half-acre circle. If beekeepers wish to include the foraging area, they must limit that area to their own property (they can click on "add a crop" while in BeeCheck). Areas that expand further than the hive's location and/or the beekeeper's property may not be approved. If a beekeeper has multiple hives, they may designate the number of hives during registration. If beehives are in close proximity to each other, it is ok to map them together and indicate the number of hives in the drop down for number of hives.

If I have a rotating crop field or mobile beehive, how can I easily map it and keep it up-to-date?

The "Active Dates" feature, which appears when you are registering a site, makes it easy to put a time stamp on your crop field or beehive. If you know your field or hive will no longer be active in that area after a certain date, you can select an expiration date for the site. If you know your field or hive will not be active until a certain date, you can also select a specific start/activation date. You may always go back and modify these dates (and other features) by selecting "make changes to this site" from the information box of your site when logged in.

How should I identify my specialty crop if it is not an option under the crop type category?

The crop type category includes the most relevant specialty crops grown in each state. The "fruits" and "vegetables" categories are broad enough to cover a wide range of specialty crops. If you need to identify a crop that is not in the drop-down menu, please select "other" and provide the crop information in the "additional notes" section. Please provide ample detail so the state data steward will be able to approve the crops submission.

Can conventional row crops be included in DriftWatch?

No. The DriftWatch Specialty Crop Site is intended for specialty crops. However, conventional crops that are “Certified Organic” or “Transitioning to Certified Organic” are treated as a specialty crop and are allowed in the registry. For these entries, the crop grown is to be identified in the notes section of the registration process. Specialty crops can be identified as "organically grown", "certified organic," or "conventional" - but only "certified organic" is permitted with non-specialty crop fields.

How can I order field signs to mark my fields?

Producers or beekeepers with at least one site registered and approved through DriftWatch, BeeCheck, or CropCheck may purchase signs or flags. Signs are not required but can provide additional visual identification and communication of your crop sites and beehives. Signs may be purchased by clicking on our “Order Signs” page and logging-in to our site.

Will mapping my crops and/or beehives ensure that pesticides are not sprayed near my property?

No. The purpose of FieldWatch and our stewardship tools (DriftWatch BeeCheck, and CropCheck) is to promote communication and awareness between crop growers, beekeepers and pesticide applicators to reduce incidences of off-target exposure. We encourage growers and applicators to continue a personal dialogue so that concerns can be reduced. We also encourage you to look at your state's pesticide regulatory agency for more information on the agricultural policies in place in your area. [The National Pesticide Information Center \(NPIC\)](#) is a helpful tool that provides resources by state. Another is the [Association of American Pesticide Control Officials \(AAPCO\)](#) for similar resources.

FAQs: Applicator Specific Questions

Do applicators have to register to use FieldWatch?

No. FieldWatch is voluntary and publicly available. The FieldCheck registry is the access portal for applicators. It may be accessed from your desktop or mobile device (iOS and Android). Applicators may access the map from the home page and zoom into the area in which they are interested to see the registered crop and apiary sites that have been submitted and approved.

As an Applicator, what are the benefits of registering with FieldCheck?

Registered applicators can identify the state, counties or area within a state in which they want to receive automated email notifications for each new specialty crop or apiary site that is approved in their area. The identified area is known as your “alert area”. In addition, in most states, beekeepers could mark their hives as “private” which means only registered applicators (registered in FieldWatch) can view those sites. If you are only accessing the “public” site and are not registered, you may not see all beehives in most states. In addition, applicators registered with FieldCheck may draw or annotate areas that may be sensitive to chemical drift but may be on the map.

Is there increased liability to the applicator due to FieldWatch providing information of sensitive crops and beehives?

No. "Pesticide product labels set the standard of care," according to legal opinion sought by FieldWatch. FIFRA (Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act) mandates that applicators must use the products in accordance with the instructions on their labels. FieldWatch is another tool/data point for applicators to use to make informed decisions in the course of their work.

Is there increased liability for applicators if they don't use FieldWatch?

No. According to the legal opinion provided to FieldWatch, "So long as an applicator follows label directions for measures related to avoiding drift, as well as any statutes or regulations related to avoiding drift, an applicator's failure to use the FieldWatch registries should not be a stand-alone basis to establish a claim for negligence or gross negligence." As an informational tool, FieldWatch may help an applicator make a more informed decision, and therefore, avoid a drift incident, reduce claims and overall liability. However, the liability related to any single incident remains the same.

Does accessing the FieldWatch registries create a higher standard of care for applicators?

No. Based on prevailing case law, legal opinion provided to FieldWatch suggests there is not a "higher standard of care beyond a duty of care framed by a pesticide's label instructions and statutes/regulations related to drift avoidance."

Does using FieldWatch reduce an applicator's liability?

No. It is the responsibility of the applicator to avoid drift; and the liability associated with any incidence is the same whether or not FieldWatch is used. However, "an applicator may effectively argue its use of the FieldWatch registries prior to application is evidence, as part of broader evidentiary showing of due care... that the applicator met the standard of care," and was not negligent by having used information at his/her disposal to make a proper application.