

Use of pesticides

Pesticides are chemical substances that are meant to kill pests. In general, a pesticide is a chemical or a biological agent such as a virus, bacterium, antimicrobial, or disinfectant that deters, incapacitates, kills, pests.

This use of pesticides is so common that the term pesticide is often treated as synonymous with plant protection product. It is commonly used to eliminate or control a variety of agricultural pests that can damage crops and livestock and reduce farm productivity. The most commonly applied pesticides are insecticides to kill insects, herbicides to kill weeds, rodenticides to kill rodents, and fungicides to control fungi, mould, and mildew.

Definition of Pesticides

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has defined pesticide as:

Any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying or controlling any pest, including vectors of human or animal disease, unwanted species of plants or animals, causing harm during or otherwise interfering with the production, processing, storage, transport, or marketing of food, agricultural commodities, wood and wood products or animal feedstuffs, or substances that may be administered to animals for the control of insects, arachnids, or other pests in or on their bodies.

Examples of pesticides

Examples of pesticides are fungicides, herbicides, and insecticides. Examples of specific synthetic chemical pesticides are glyphosate, Acephate, Deet, Propoxur, Metaldehyde, Boric Acid, Diazinon, Dursban, DDT, Malathion, etc.

Types of Pesticides

Pesticides are also referred to by the type of pest they control. Pesticides can be either biodegradable pesticides, that break down into harmless compounds by bacteria and other living organisms, or persistent/Non-Biodegradable pesticides, which can take months or years to break down.

Classification of pesticides are according to the types of pests they kill
Grouped by the pest types they Kill;

Insecticides – Insects

Herbicide – Plants

Rodenticides – Rodents (rats & mice)

Bactericides – Bacteria

Fungicides – Fungicide

Larvicides – Larvae

Uses

1. Pesticides are useful in controlling organisms that are toxic or harmful to their environment.
2. Herbicides are useful in controlling algae and weeds.
3. They are useful in grocery stores and food storage facilities to control rats and insects infesting on food.
4. They are in use to kill mosquitoes that can spread life-threatening diseases such as the West Nile virus, yellow fever, and malaria.
5. Also, they are useful in the agricultural sector to prevent or kill insects and other organisms that feed on crops.