

## **Study of Labels on Pesticides and How They Deviate From the Current Pesticide Guidelines in Sri Lanka**

Ranawaka RTYS (1), Lamabadusuriya BA (2). 1,2. National Poisons and Drug Information Centre, National Hospital of Sri Lanka, Colombo.

**Objective** : Study of labels of pesticide usage in Sri Lanka in view of: 1. Whether confirming with the standard guidelines given by Registrar of Pesticides. 2. Improve quality of labels regarding information given. 3. Make instructions given more user friendly, by achieving all above to reduce morbidity and mortality from poisoning.

**Background** : In Sri Lanka wide range of Agrochemicals are used by farmers. Proper user friendly instructions and careful handling of pesticides are essential to reduce morbidity and mortality from poisoning. The current literacy rate in Sri Lanka is 90.7%. Therefore a good usage could be encouraged by accurate labelling. **Method** : Randomly selected 100 pesticide labels were studied during one month period. **Results** : According to the guidelines under section 2.1.9 the word “Poison” is in red colour text in white background. 22% labels deviated from this practice. Under section 3.1.3 colours using the hazard colour band should not be used as background colours in the label excluding white. 72% labels deviated from it. Under section 2.1.4 in first aid information regarding eye contamination the suggested information is not clear to a lay person and instructions given to induce vomiting is not satisfactory in all labels. Under section 3.1.2 “Poisons Information Centre” is printed only in English in all labels whereas majority of farmers are conversant in Sinhala. **Conclusion** : Labels must be revised according to the given guidelines. All the correct guidelines should be strictly adhered according to the current Pesticide act in Sri Lanka and should be included as an amendment. Other suggestions are to increase the font size of the letters of the label and meaning of the accepted international colour code should be very clearly indicated to the public without using them as background colours. **References** : 1. Guidelines on Application for Approval of labels on Pesticide given by Registrar of Pesticides section under 8 of act No. 33 of 1980. 2. Control of Pesticide Act No. 33 of 1980 in Sri Lanka. 3. Control of Pesticide (Amendment) Act No. 6 of 1994 in Sri Lanka. 4. Literacy facts 2000 – 2004 figures estimated by UNESCO Institute for Statistics in September 2006 in Sri Lanka.