To: Canadian Coalition for Health and Environment
Re: Questionnaire for Federal Candidates
From: Dan Wicklum- Liberal Candidate Carleton-Lanark

As my formal training is in biology, I am acutely aware of the environmental effects of harmful chemicals, including pesticides. I also have an intimate interest in topics relating to the environment, and our place within.
Pesticides have been the focus of ongoing research and re-assessment for the last several years. Especially relevant are the older types of pesticides on the Canadian market and their possible negative side-effects on soil, air and water. The federal government, through the Pest Management and Review Agency (PMRA) in Health Canada, has been conducting a review of over 400 ingredients used in commercially available pesticides. To date, most of the substances reviewed have passed the rigorous standards and guidelines though some have been withdrawn from the market.
In 2000, the Minister of Health announced the Action Plan for Urban Use Pesticides, aimed at promoting reduced-risk products and environmentally sound choices in pest management. In March 2002, Bill C-53 was introduced. The *Pest Control Products Act* (*PCPA* 2002) received Royal Assent on December 12, 2002. It includes new responsibilities and tougher guidelines on pesticide use. The PMRA takes the lead on the science of testing the substances. Since 1995, it has been studying pesticide formulants, developing new guidelines and responding to test results. A lot of the research is shared and harmonized with our counterparts in the United States since we share the market for commonly used pesticides. Testing procedures depend on the most recent advances in science and involve building in a huge safety margin.
As of October 2003, 64 of the 405 ingredients have been reviewed and addressed. Another 80 ingredients are scheduled for review by first quarter of 2005.
The Canadian database for pesticide sales is nearly complete.

Regulatory and advertising concerns
The Liberal government has worked to address the concerns with the reporting, advertising and information-sharing components of pesticide regulation through the *PCPA*. The *PCPA* contains provisions to make the registration system more transparent by:
- establishing a public registry to allow access to detailed evaluation reports on registered pesticides;
- allowing the public to view the test data on which these pesticide evaluations are based; and,
- allowing the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) to share scientific studies with provincial/territorial and international regulators, which will enhance the process for international joint reviews of pesticides, giving Canadian growers equal access to newer, safer pesticides so they can be competitive in the marketplace.

The PCPA aims to strengthen post-registration control of pesticides by:
- requiring pesticide companies to report adverse effects;
- requiring re-evaluations of older pesticides 15 years after they are registered;

- providing the Minister with the authority to remove pesticides from the market if required data are not supplied; and,
- providing increased powers of inspection and higher maximum penalties,
up to $1 million for the most serious offences.

Priority resolution #113 – moratorium on non-essential cosmetic pesticide use
The Liberal party is the only federal party to have called for such a moratorium. Part of the work towards implementing this resolution has been carried out in the House of Commons Standing Committee on Sustainable Development. This all-party committee hears, on a regular basis, the technical testimony of experts on environmental regulatory issues, including limiting the use of pesticides and the labeling of pesticide products. For instance, the committee has asked the necessary questions and followed a process to compel the PMRA to speed up their pesticide review – the findings of this review could support the decision to ban non-essential pesticide use in Canada.
We realize this policy will require an understanding and cooperation with municipal governments across Canada.

Workplace Hazardous Materials Information Systems (WHMIS) and public labeling
Pesticides are not covered by the *Hazardous Products Act* (1985). This Act deals with chemicals commonly found in industrial processes and was not intended for pest products.
Since the substances defined as "pesticides" are covered by the *PCPA*, there is a separate body of law responsible for determining the protocol of use. Most of the occupational exposure risks associated with pesticides are managed through provisions in the amended *PCPA*. Those substances found to be too hazardous for lawn use, for example, would be withdrawn from the market, pre-empting any potential occupational exposure.

Pesticide Inventory and Monitoring
The government has initiated work on completing the Canadian inventory of all the pesticide formulants available and sold on the market, in part to better document and understand the cumulative pesticide release into our environment.
A system for monitoring levels of selected chemicals in rivers and lakes already exists. The science of cumulative impact assessment, a key step in determining the actual risk posed by pesticides, is a new and expanding area. Some of the progress on this file depends on the classification of risks posed by substances under CEPA. There is an important element of cooperation with our scientific counterparts in the United States, as we share important environmental areas like the Great Lakes region.

Weaning Canada off the dependence on pesticides
The agricultural sector is the largest user of pesticides in Canada. Our government has taken initiatives to lower the use of pesticides and introduce reduced-risk types of pesticides. In 2002, the Ministers of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and Health Canada outlined a joint initiative to help Canadian farmers and consumers benefit from the increased availability of reduced-risk pesticides. In 2003, AAFC, together with industry, the provinces and other federal departments, established the Pesticide Risk

Reduction and Minor Use Programs. These programs will enhance the environmental stewardship of Canadian producers, make it easier for them to compete in global markets, and provide safer food for Canadians.
The Risk Reduction Program complements the work being done in the Minor Use Program, by highlighting priorities for pest management including biological controls, natural products and safer minor use pesticides. The Minor Use Program will help improve access to minor use pesticides. Together, these efforts reflect the goals of the Agriculture Policy Framework -making Canada the world leader in environmentally responsible production while improving air, water and soil quality and conserving biodiversity.
A Liberal government will continue on this course.

Disclosure of exact content - Labeling
The PMRA is working on a list of substances – both the active ingredients and the formulants – that need to be thoroughly reviewed. Under the provisions of *PCPA* more stringent guidelines for risk communication are now in place. The disclosure of exact content is the next step, provided the findings of the review warrant it. There will be a public registry, as part of PCPA, to allow access to detailed evaluation reports on registered pesticides.

What will you do about the labeling of genetically modified foods?
On April 15, 2004 the Government of Canada announced the adoption of the *Standard for Voluntary Labeling and Advertising of Foods that Are and Are Not Products of Genetic Engineering*, as a national standard of Canada.
-it sets a framework for meaningful claims about the presence or absence of genetically engineered food ingredients. Intended to provide consumers with consistent information for making informed food choices while providing labeling and advertising guidance for food companies, manufacturers and importers.
-The standard defines terms and sets out various criteria for making claims about whether or not a food contains ingredients that are products of genetic engineering. Having a standard ensures that all labeling claims are understandable, informative, not false or misleading, verifiable and compliant with all current Canadian regulations.
-Adoption of the voluntary standard is the result of a thorough development and approval process - via a multi-stakeholder committee - facilitated by the Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB) and started in 1999. The process was reviewed by the Standards Council of Canada.
-This standard represents a broad consensus on the part of consumer groups, farmers, industry and government. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Public Works and Government Services Canada and Health Canada were among the six federal departments that participated in the process for the development of the voluntary standard.