



Information Sheet

10.6 Understanding herbicide labels




Herbicide labels are regarded as a mandatory product packaging document which provides a guide to using these chemicals safely and effectively. It conveys essential use recommendations and safety information. The herbicide label is considered a legal document and is, therefore, enforceable and it will be a violation to use a herbicide product in a manner inconsistent with its labelling.

The herbicide label is the main information source explaining the identity and directions of use. The label should be a clear and simple method to inform herbicide retailers and users about the type of herbicide and its mode of action group. The information provided on the label includes the product trade name, common names of active ingredients, the content of all active ingredients, name and address of licence holder/manufacturer, date of manufacture, information for use and the word registered to indicate that the herbicide is registered.

In addition, the label informs the user about the hazards of the herbicide, and risks of its use thus product warnings and precautionary symbols are used, first aid information and safety pictograms which illustrate safety information are also included. The label is an important tool to protect human health and the environment. Additional information may be provided using safety data sheets.

The hazard colour coding is used to group herbicides according to the toxicity hazard class to which they belong, and each has a different colour code. Red, yellow, blue and green bands on labels represent varying degrees of danger, with red being the most hazardous and green the least (Table 1).

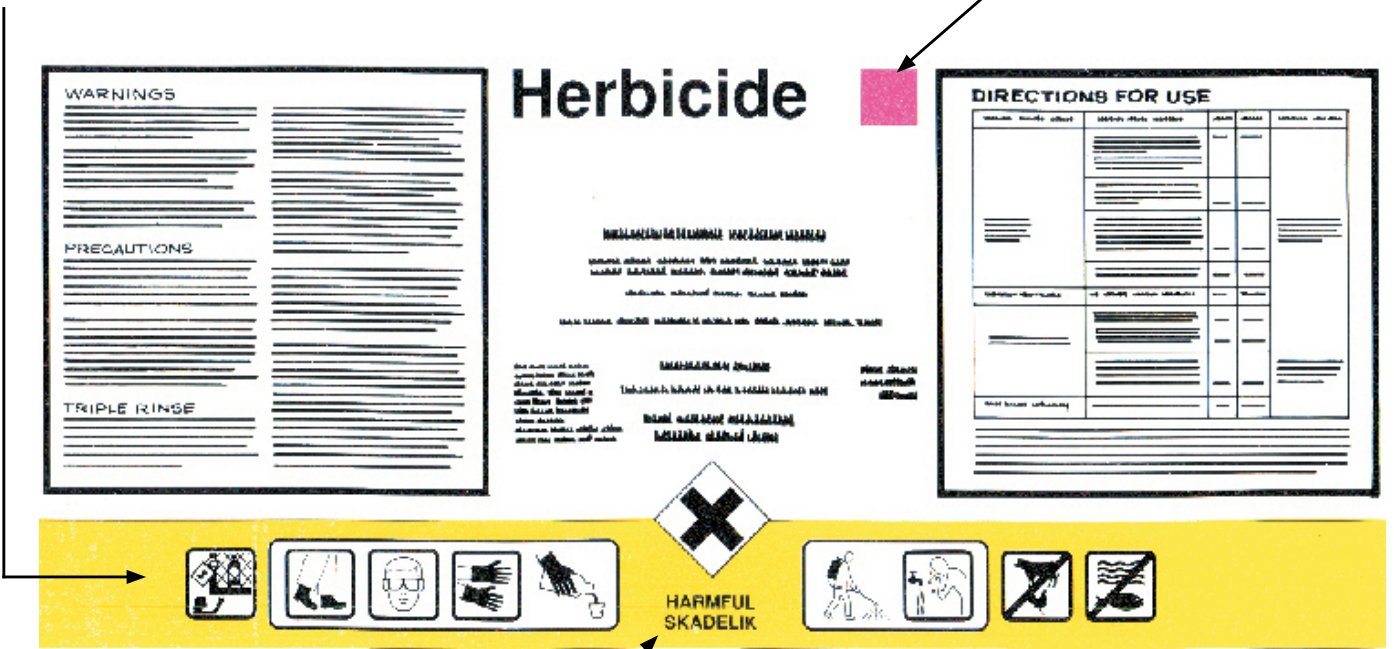
Table 1: Hazard colour coding herbicide classification

Hazard colour coding herbicide's classification				
Class	Description	Colour band	Symbol	Category
IA	Extremely hazardous	Red		Danger
IB	Highly hazardous	Red		Danger
II	Moderately hazardous	Yellow		Harmful
III	Slightly hazardous	Blue	n/a	Caution
	Unlikely to pose acute hazards	Green	n/a	Caution

It is important that the label and material safety data sheets (MSDS) are read and understood before using the herbicide. Growers are also reminded that the container label acts only as a basic guide to users and that it is essential to read the technical information supplied as well.

Pictogram illustrating handling instructions.

All herbicide labels have a purple square so that the user can easily identify the product as belonging to this group of agricultural chemicals.

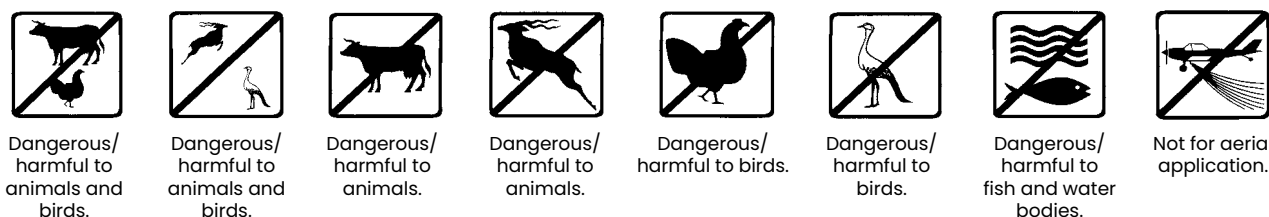


Colour band based on hazard class.

The pictograms in the colour bands cover the basic do's and don'ts of handling, application and storage of chemicals. The pictograms within a box to the left of centre (A) advise on the handling of the concentrated product. The pictograms in a box to the immediate right of centre (B) advise on the application of the diluted spray mixture. Further pictograms for storage advice (C), and other specific warnings (D) are located to the extreme left and right in the colour band respectively.



A full list of pictogram descriptions is given below.



(Information for this article has been supplied by AVCASA)

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