SOP: 3.1 R1

EFFECTIVE DATE: August 14, 2024

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TITLE: **Plot Selection**

PURPOSE: To establish the necessary parameters for selecting the plot that can ensure the generation of reproducible data and samples with sufficient uniformity.

SCOPE: All locations conducting field trial(s) for Minor Use Foundation to determine the magnitude of pesticide residues

PROCEDURES: The criteria for defining the experimental plot are listed below, which follow the instructions indicated in FAO Manual 225, p. 51.[1]

1. Site selection will be made in accordance with the horticultural practices acceptable for the commodity and the requirements established by the protocol.
2. The site will be large enough to accommodate the required number of replicates, buffer zones, and treatments in accordance with an approved study protocol and for the commodity to be grown under simulated commercial conditions, yielding samples of sufficient size to comply with protocol sample size requirements.
3. Use a commercial crop variety that must be found in adequate phytosanitary conditions. The type of soil at the test site must be clearly described and indicated in the field data notebook. If the application is made directly to the soil, the study should include tests with different soil types or as directed by the protocol.
4. The location of plots within the commercial plantation should be at one end of the commercial area, to maintain isolation and avoid the effect of commercial work or applications, or other research studies that may influence the test results.

[1] Manual on the Submission and Evaluation of Pesticide Residues Data _ Third Edition (2016)

5. Locate nontreated plots within the same area [preferably upwind and upslope of the treated plot(s)] but with enough isolation to produce nontreated, noncontaminated samples.
6. There must be a distance of at least 30.5 meters (or the distance indicated by the protocol) between the treated plot and the untreated plot (absolute control) to avoid contamination by product drift. The untreated plot must be located so that the wind does not drag material from the treated plot.
7. A map should be made to define the location of the trial relative to the nearest city or town, and another map with the location of the trial on the farm or plantation. A separate map of the plots must indicate the location of the treated and untreated plots relative to each other, including the buffer zone, distance to the plots from at least two permanent reference points, and distances and relative locations of any other experimental plots that may be located on the farm or plantation.
8. The plot corners will be clearly defined with visible markers such as stakes or flags. Label each plot with the field identification number, treatment number, treatment name, test substance name, and crop, and/or as required by the study protocol. On each visit, check to see that the markers are in good condition.
9. Soil analysis should be conducted to describe the test plot. Analysis should include pH and % organic matter, and physical properties (i.e., sand, silt, and clay composition). It should also include the climatological information of the area, and the cultural activities and maintenance pesticide applications of the test site during the trial period, and for at least one year and preferably for the last 3 years. All this information must be properly recorded.
10. Post signs stating that the crop is for experimental purposes and that the food commodity is not suitable for human or animal consumption. Destruction of the treated crop, including the date performed, should be documented in the field data notebook.

Approved by:

October 5, 2026

Anna Gore, Executive Director
Minor Use Foundation

Date