



## **American Agronomic Stewardship Alliance**

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### **Q&A Fact Sheet**

#### **What is the American Agronomic Stewardship Alliance (AASA)?**

The American Agronomic Stewardship Alliance (AASA) is a not-for-profit 501C (6) organization that has taken the lead in developing a stewardship inspection program for agricultural retail facilities that store bulk, mini-bulks, Portable Refillable Containers (PRCs) and packaged crop protection chemical products.

#### **Why is this program needed?**

This program is designed to enhance stewardship and increase efficiency. The AASA has developed a single checklist and schedule for inspecting agricultural retail facilities. This replaced the duplicative bulk inspections of facilities conducted by manufacturers for several years.

Working together, manufacturers, distributors and retailers have developed a more effective way to conduct facility inspections.

#### **What are the benefits to retailers?**

Facilities are inspected more efficiently; instead of each manufacturer conducting a facility inspection, the AASA conducts the inspection with resulting data available on a fee basis to all participating manufacturers and distributors. Distributors that are AASA members do not pay a fee for inspection data for their retail facility. Retailers have fewer and more efficient inspections based on one stewardship checklist. There is no cost to retail facilities and they are provided with a copy of the inspection report free of charge.

#### **What are the benefits to manufacturers and distributors?**

Manufacturers and distributors have a one-stop access to facility inspection data through the AASA. Better data about facilities means better decision making. The program replaces costly and duplicative inspections previously conducted individually by manufacturers. *The AASA's inspection data services are available to all participating crop protection product manufacturers on a fee basis. Distributors that are AASA members do not pay for inspection data for their locations. Release of inspection data is confidential and limited to those locations where manufacturers and distributors have a bulk presence. Inspection results data is available to these manufacturers and distributors for stewardship purposes only.* As in the past, manufacturers and distributors who have or plan to have a bulk presence at a facility will use the inspection data as a tool to determine where crop protection products can be stored and used safely.

### **How is the program being implemented and managed?**

The AASA oversees the program. A board of directors that includes crop protection product manufacturers, retailers, distributors, state regulators and agribusiness associations, manages the AASA. The AASA conducts inspections, issues facility reports, trains inspectors and ensures the checklist is kept current.

### **How many facilities have been inspected?**

Approximately 5,000 U.S. facilities storing bulk and packaged crop protection products have been inspected over a three-year cycle that began in 2004. (Packaged-only retail sites may be included in a later cycle.) This three-year cycle provides for fairness by giving facilities time to address any areas of concern. The fourth three-year inspection cycle will be completed in 2015.

### **How and when will inspections be conducted?**

Inspections are conducted by third-party vendors using the comprehensive AASA stewardship checklist. This checklist covers general facility data, information about bulk and packaged product storage and safety training. Inspections occur primarily from June through September of each year. Facility managers are provided with a copy of their inspection reports.

### **Who will conduct the inspections and maintain the data?**

Inspectors from Regulatory Consultants Inc., FarmChem, Piedmont Environmental Consulting LLC and JTAG, Inc will be contacting facility managers to set up inspection appointments. Inspector credentials can be verified at [www.aginspect.org](http://www.aginspect.org). Regulatory Consultants Inc. will also be responsible for all data management.

### **How many facilities will be inspected in 2015?**

Approximately 1,500 facilities will be inspected in the following states: CT, DE, FL, GA, IL, KY, MA, MD, ME, MN, MO, NC, NH, NJ, NY, PA, SC, VA, VT, WI, WV. Managers of all bulk agricultural retail facilities to be inspected will be notified in advance by the AASA.

### **How will the inspection data be used?**

Facility inspection data will be available to participating crop protection product manufacturers and distributors, who have or plan to have a bulk presence at a retail facility. The inspection data will be used to assist with decisions about where products can be stored safely.

### **How are these inspections different from what went before?**

For more than 15 years, crop protection product manufacturers and distributors inspected retail facilities using their own inspection programs. In some years a retail facility may have had multiple inspections, based on multiple sets of criteria. Now, retailers are receiving a single, regular inspection, using one checklist. The AASA is providing one-stop inspection data for manufacturers and distributors who are participating in the AASA stewardship program. Some manufacturers and distributors may continue to conduct bulk site inspections at facilities on an annual basis for the years when there will not be an AASA inspection. Companies may also continue to conduct inspections when new bulk tanks are added at a facility, tanks are taken over from other suppliers or when there is a change in product to be stored in established tanks.

### **Is there a program to ensure the accuracy and quality of the third-party vendor's inspections?**

Yes. In addition to annual training and testing of all third-party inspectors, the AASA contracts with an independent company, Klean Wash Inc., to “check” the inspectors. Fifty retail facilities, which have been inspected in the same year, are selected at random from representative states to be reinspected. The results of these inspections show a high level of accuracy and quality of the third-party inspections.

### **Will this data be available to regulators?**

Individual facility inspection data is not shared with or made available to regulators, individuals or groups. The data is owned by the AASA. Only crop protection product manufacturing companies that pay a fee and have or plan to have a bulk presence at a given retail facility and the distributor whose facility has been inspected will have access to inspection data. State or national summary inspection data information is available to regulators if requested, however, individual facility data is not provided – summaries only.

**Contact the American Agronomic Stewardship Alliance or your state association for more information about the stewardship program or visit [www.aginspect.org](http://www.aginspect.org)**