

NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

July 21, 2022

For immediate release

Goehring opposed to EPA banning agriculture pesticide uses

BISMARCK, N.D. – Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring strongly opposes the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) current pattern of severely restricting or banning applications of safely-used critical agricultural chemicals.

“The EPA is now proposing to severely restrict the use of atrazine,” Goehring said. “Atrazine is a highly effective weed killer that has been proven safe in over 7000 studies and has been used safely on North Dakota farms and ranches for over 60 years.”

“It readily appears the EPA is ignoring its own science at times and does not fully appreciate the actual effects of their actions,” Goehring further explained. “Continually taking more and more crucial tools out of the agricultural producer’s toolbox, when there are no cost-effective and viable alternatives available, will greatly harm North Dakota’s agricultural economy and threaten our food supply.”

“Certain environmental activist groups routinely sue the EPA because the EPA frequently fails to perform its statutory duties and does not meet its mandatory deadlines. Instead of fighting these lawsuits, the EPA commonly rolls over and settles with these groups – consenting to do whatever the groups demand,” Goehring said. “In 2017, the EPA rightfully prohibited its use of these ‘sue and settle’ and ‘friendly lawsuit’ tactics. However, earlier this year under the Biden administration, the EPA formally rescinded that ban, permitting these lawsuits to once again drive its regulatory rule making.”

Goehring gave the recent example that “when several environmental groups sued the EPA regarding its 2020 science-based decision reauthorizing atrazine use for the next 15 years, the EPA simply surrendered. Despite no change in the science, the EPA just gave up – telling the court it would completely redo its previous atrazine registration process.”

Goehring intends to submit official comments to the EPA strongly opposing the EPA’s newly proposed severe atrazine restrictions.

-30-

MEDIA: For more information, please contact Michelle Mielke at (701) 328-2233 or mmielke@nd.gov.