

AN APPLICANT'S GUIDE TO  
REDUCTION OF NON-SPRAY  
BUFFER ZONES FOR PLANT  
PROTECTION PRODUCTS

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## Relevant regulations

As of 01.06.2015, plant protection products in Norway are regulated by the Norwegian regulation implementing the EU regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 with specific transitional measures for Norway. The Norwegian adaptations to the EU regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 are described in the Decision of the EFTA Joint Committee No 203/2014.

- [The Norwegian regulation implementing the EU regulation \(EC\) No 1107/2009, Forskrift om plantevernmidler \(FOR-2015-05-06-455\), with appendices](#)
- [The Decision of the EFTA Joint Committee No 203/2014](#)
- [The Norwegian regulation on Food Safety Authority application fees, Forskrift om betaling av gebyrer for særskilte ytelser fra Mattilsynet \(FOR-2004-02-13-406\), with appendices](#)

## Version history

This guidance document will be updated as needed, following e.g. changes in the regulations or feedback from users. If anything is unclear, or you have a suggestion for making this guide better, please contact us at [pesticider@mattilsynet.no](mailto:pesticider@mattilsynet.no).

Date	Version	What
07.04.2020	1.0	First draft published
11.05.2020	1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clarification on required documentation for products already on the Norwegian market</li><li>• Information on crops where both "air blast" and "ground spray" application could apply</li></ul>
19.05.2020	1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clarification on the procedure for product applications sent to the NFSA before the publishing of this document, but where a decision had not yet been made</li></ul>

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# 1 Introduction

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If a non-spray buffer zone is required for safe use of a plant protection product, this is stated on the product label. These non-spray buffer zones have previously been set without considering drift reducing equipment or techniques in the risk assessment, but this is no longer the case.

When applying plant protection products in the field, non-spray buffer zones may now be reduced, within certain conditions, if spray drift reducing nozzles or other spray drift reducing techniques are used. Spray drift reduction will also be considered as a regular part of the environmental risk assessment of plant protection products.

This document is intended as guidance for applicants seeking the approval of new plant protection products, as well as guidance on the revision of labels for plant protection products that were approved on the condition of a non-spray buffer zone before the publication of this document.

## *User's guide to reduction of spray drift*

If you are looking for information on how to carry out the spray operation correctly, or looking for the list of “certified” low-drift spraying equipment, please see the user's guide to reduction of non-spray buffer zones, “Tiltak som gir avdriftsreduksjon ved bruk av plantevernmidler”. It is available on our web pages ([www.mattilsynet.no](http://www.mattilsynet.no)).

## 2 Products covered by this guidance

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This guidance document is valid for the following plant protection products:

- Plant protection products that **were** already authorised for the Norwegian market on the condition of a non-spray buffer zone to mitigate drift to the aquatic environment (5, 10, 20 or 30 meters) **before the first publication of this document**.
- Plant protection products previously approved for the Norwegian market and submitted for renewed authorisation.
- Plant protection products not yet on the Norwegian market and submitted for authorisation.

This guidance document is not applicable to vegetated buffer strips (10 meters). These are aimed at reducing water pollution with plant protection products from run-off and erosion, not spray drift.

### *Mammalian toxicology risk assessment*

Please note that risk mitigation measures for the mammalian toxicology risk assessment are not within the scope of this document. For further information, please see the “Guidance document on work-sharing in the northern zone in the authorisation of plant protection products”. The Guidance document on work-sharing in the Northern zone is updated once a year and the newest version can be found on our web pages at [www.mattilsynet.no](http://www.mattilsynet.no).

## 3 Procedure

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Non-spray buffer zones are applied on a treatment strategy basis for each plant protection product, i.e. for the same product, different buffer zone distances may be set for different crops or for different growth stages of the same crop.

A non-spray buffer zone up to a maximum of 30 meters is to be used as the first option for off-field risk mitigation for both field and arboreal crops. The plant protection product must pass the environmental risk assessment for all intended uses with a 30-meter non-spray buffer zone. The buffer zone for each intended use can then be narrowed using spray drift reduction.

Please note that because of the general rule of a minimum distance from the treated area to surface water<sup>1</sup>, the non-spray buffer zone cannot be less than 3 meters unless the label specifies otherwise. Also, if the plant protection product has been approved on the condition of a 10-meter-wide vegetated buffer strip in addition to a non-spray buffer, the non-spray buffer cannot be reduced below 10 meters, even with high spray drift reduction.

The potential for reduction of a non-spray buffer zone depends on the crop and on the type of spraying equipment used:

- Ground spray: 50, 75 and 90 % spray drift reduction possible
- Air blast: 50 % spray drift reduction possible

By “ground spray” is meant equipment for application of plant protection products that generate aerosols that are pointed towards the ground, like horizontal boom sprayers. This generally applies to field crops, vegetables and ornamentals.

By “air blast” is meant equipment for application of plant protection products that generate aerosols that are mainly pointed sideways or upwards, like vertical boom sprayers or broadcast air-assisted sprayers. This generally applies to crops like orchards, other arboreal crops and bush berries.

### 3.1 Plant protection products on the Norwegian market

#### 3.1.1 How to apply for revision of the product label

For plant protection products that were already approved for the Norwegian market on the condition of a non-spray buffer zone before the first publication of this document, the authorisation holder may apply for a revision of the product label.

The product label may be revised to add the option of spray drift reduction and a narrower non-spray buffer according to Tables 1 or 2, depending on crop and the type of spraying equipment to be used.

The authorisation holder must provide the draft label to the Norwegian Food Safety Authority for control. These applications will be prioritised.

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<sup>1</sup> [Forskrift om plantevernmidler § 20](#)

No other documentation is required to support the label update. An updated risk assessment will only be required on re-registration of the product after expiry of the current authorisation.

Table 1. Ground spray application method – width of non-spray buffer with and without spray drift reduction.

Non-spray buffer without spray drift reduction	>50 % spray drift reduction	>75 % spray drift reduction	>90 % spray drift reduction
5 m	3 m	3 m	3 m
10 m	5 m	3 m	3 m
20 m	10 m	5 m	3 m
30 m	15 m	8 m	3 m

Table 2. Air blast application method – width of non-spray buffer with and without spray drift reduction.

Non-spray buffer without spray drift reduction	>50 % spray drift reduction
5 m	3 m
10 m	5 m
20 m	10 m
30 m	15 m

### 3.1.2 Information to be included on the label

The Norwegian Food Safety Authority recommends that the information on non-spray buffer widths and spray drift reduction be presented in the form of a table on the product label. Only the relevant information from Tables 1 or 2 should be included, and not the entire table. This table should be placed under the heading “environmental protection safety precautions”, aka “Bruksvilkår for å beskytte miljøet”, or similar.

The table description should include some variant of the following information in Norwegian:

1. EN: To protect aquatic organisms, an unsprayed buffer zone to surface water bodies is required. The unsprayed buffer zone may be reduced according to the following table if drift reducing technology is used.

NO: For å beskytte vannlevende organismer har dette produktet avstandskrav til overflatevann. Avstandskravet kan gjøres smalere ved å redusere sprøyteavdriften i henhold til tabellen.



2. EN: Detailed guidance on how to carry out the spray operation correctly is contained in a separate booklet available from The Norwegian Food Safety Authority's website. All reductions of non-spray buffer zones must be carried out in accordance with this booklet.

NO: Vilkår for å oppnå avdriftsreduksjon er beskrevet i egen veileder som er tilgjengelig på Mattilsynets nettsider. All reduksjon av avstandskrav må skje i tråd med veilederen.

Information on non-spray buffer widths without spray drift reduction must remain in the product label's safety field.

In case of a crop where both "ground spray" and "air blast" application methods may be used, spray drift reduction and distances from Table 1 can be added to the label, provided that it is clearly marked that 75% and 90% spray reduction is not valid for "air blast" application methods.

- EN: Not applicable for broadcast air-assisted sprayers

NO: Gjelder ikke ved bruk av tåkesprøyte

Please see chapter 4 for example labels.

### 3.1.3 Publishing of the revised label

For already labelled product, it is sufficient that the revised label be published online on the web pages of the Norwegian Food Safety Authority. When new batches of the product are manufactured, the revised label should be used.

### 3.1.4 Fees

Per 01.04.2020, a fee of 3000 NOK is applied to the checking of a new draft label. However, if the applicant applies for other revisions/re-evaluations of the product at the same time, the application will move to the back of the ordinary queue and standard fees for the relevant application type will apply<sup>2</sup>.

## 3.2 Plant protection products not on the Norwegian market or submitted for renewal of authorisation

### 3.2.1 Information to be included in the (draft) registration report

Spray drift reduction will be considered as a regular part of the environmental risk assessment of plant protection products.

In the (draft) registration report, the applicant must provide a FOCUS Surface Water Step 4 exposure assessment with relevant combinations<sup>3</sup> of non-spray buffer and percentage-wise spray drift reduction. Step 4 calculations shall be performed using the "Surface Water Assessment eNabler" (SWAN) software tool<sup>4</sup>. The SWAN tool allows the user to incorporate mitigation measures for spray drift into FOCUS Surface Water Step 3 calculations.

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<sup>2</sup> Rates available at <https://lovdata.no/dokument/SF/forskrift/2004-02-13-406>

<sup>3</sup> Please see the "Guidance document on work-sharing in the northern zone in the authorisation of plant protection products", available at [www.mattilsynet.no](http://www.mattilsynet.no).

<sup>4</sup> Available at <https://sites.google.com/site/surfacewaterassessment/home>.

Procedures and format for applications, as well as details about contents of risk assessments, are described in the “Guidance document on work-sharing in the northern zone in the authorisation of plant protection products”. The Guidance document on work-sharing in the Northern zone is updated once a year and the newest version can be found on our web pages at [www.mattilsynet.no](http://www.mattilsynet.no).

### 3.2.2 Information to be included on the label

The Norwegian Food Safety Authority will check the draft label during the processing of your application to ensure that the contents of the label are supported by relevant data and the environmental risk assessment.

We recommend that the information on non-spray buffer widths and spray drift reduction be presented in the form of a table on the product label. This table should be placed under the heading “environmental protection safety precautions”, aka “Bruksvilkår for å beskytte miljøet”, or similar.

The table description should include some variant of the following information in Norwegian:

1. EN: To protect aquatic organisms, an unsprayed buffer zone to surface water bodies is required. The unsprayed buffer zone may be reduced according to the following table if drift reducing technology is used.

NO: For å beskytte vannlevende organismer har dette produktet avstandskrav til overflatevann. Avstandskravet kan gjøres smalere ved å redusere sprøyteavdriften i henhold til tabellen.

2. EN: Detailed guidance on how to carry out the spray operation correctly is contained in a separate booklet available from The Norwegian Food Safety Authority’s website. All reductions of non-spray buffer zones must be carried out in accordance with this booklet.

NO: Vilkår for å oppnå avdriftsreduksjon er beskrevet i egen veileder som er tilgjengelig på Mattilsynets nettsider. All reduksjon av avstandskrav må skje i tråd med veilederen.

Please see chapter 4 for example labels.

### 3.2.3 Applications that were under consideration at the time of publication of this document

In cases where the application for authorisation of a plant protection product was under consideration by the NFSA before the first publication of this document, but no decision had yet been made, the applicant will be given the opportunity to provide a supplementary FOCUS Surface Water Step 4 exposure assessment and an updated environmental risk assessment. This is only valid if a non-spray buffer is needed to pass the risk assessment, and no FOCUS Surface Water Step 4 exposure assessment was submitted along with the application. In that case, the NFSA will contact the applicant. If the applicant does not wish to send supplementary information, the NFSA will make a decision based on the information that is accessible.

If the applicant did not provide supplementary information on NFSA’s request but at a later date wishes to include spray drift reduction as a risk mitigation measure, they will need to apply for an amendment of the authorisation (article 33).

### 3.2.4 Fees

Standard fees for the relevant application type apply<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Rates available at <https://lovdata.no/dokument/SF/forskrift/2004-02-13-406>

## 4 Example labels

This chapter contains examples of how the information on non-spray buffers and spray drift reduction may be presented on the product label.

For more information on label design, please see our applicant's guide to labelling requirements for plant protection products, the "Veileder for utforming av plantevernmiddeletiketter", which will be published on our web pages at [www.mattilsynet.no](http://www.mattilsynet.no) within 2020. It will provide updated guidance on Norwegian labelling requirements and recommendations for professional, amateur and experimental plant protection products.

### Example 1.

#### Bruksvilkår for å beskytte miljøet

For å beskytte vannlevende organismer har dette produktet avstandskrav til overflatevann. Avstandskravet kan gjøres smalere ved å redusere sprøyteavdriften i henhold til tabellen.

Vilkår for å oppnå avdriftsreduksjon er beskrevet i egen veileder som er tilgjengelig på Mattilsynets nettsider. All reduksjon av avstandskrav må skje i tråd med veilederen.

Bruksområde	Avdriftsreduksjon			
	0 %	>50 %	>75 %	>90 %
Kål	5 m	3 m	3 m	3 m
Eple	30 m	15 m		

**Example 2. Crops where both “air blast” and “ground spray” application techniques can be used**

**Bruksvilkår for å beskytte miljøet**

For å beskytte vannlevende organismer har dette produktet avstandskrav til overflatevann. Avstandskravet kan gjøres smalere ved å redusere sprøyteavdriften i henhold til tabellen.

Vilkår for å oppnå avdriftsreduksjon er beskrevet i egen veileder som er tilgjengelig på Mattilsynets nettsider. All reduksjon av avstandskrav må skje i tråd med veilederen.

Bruksområde	Avdriftsreduksjon			
	0 %	>50 %	>75 %	>90 %
Prydplanter	30 m	15 m	8 m*	3 m*
Korn	30 m	15 m	8 m	3 m

\*Gjelder ikke ved bruk av tåkesprøyte

