



Central Farm, Cayo District, Belize, Central America
Tel: 501-824-2640 Fax: 501-824-3486 E-mail: pcbinfo@btln
www.pcbbelize.com



PRESS RELEASE

Launch of the Pesticides Control Board's GROW SAFE-Belize Campaign

Central Farm. April 24, 2019. The Pesticides Control Board is pleased to announce the launching of its GROW SAFE-Belize Campaign at this year's National Agriculture and Trade Show in Belmopan on 27 and 28 April 2019.

The GROW SAFE-Belize campaign will be promoting best practices in pest and pesticide management, in an effort to address the unintended use of pesticides, commonly referred to as pesticide misuse and abuse, thereby contributing to increased food safety.

More specifically, the campaign aims to stimulate a wider adoption of INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT (IPM), a broad-based approach that applies the practices of prevention, monitoring and control to suppress pests below the economic injury level. The IPM approach is effective and also minimizes risks to people and the environment as a result of increased use of biological and cultural pest control practices, and through a reduced reliance on pesticides.

Additionally, with the Pesticides Control Board's expanded criteria for the classification of Restricted Use Pesticides, the GROW SAFE-Belize campaign is expected to assist farmers in the adoption of alternatives to these pesticides, through inter-institutional collaboration in training and technology transfer.

In the initial stage, the campaign will focus on strengthened data gathering at the farm level with respect to pest and pesticide management practices, and consumer polls to gauge the level of awareness and concern about pesticides and food safety; for analysis and the development of targeted interventions.

In implementing the GROW SAFE-Belize campaign, the Pesticides Control Board shall seek public-private partnership opportunities with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Environment, Sustainable Development and Immigration, the Belize Agricultural Health Authority and the Department of the Environment, the Bureau of Standards and consumer advocacy groups, the Ministry of Health, the National Food and Nutrition Security Commission, the Ministry of Education and educational institutions, agricultural input suppliers, non-governmental organizations, farmers, farmers' groups and associations and others.

The support of all stakeholders including the public is considered critical to the success of the GROW SAFE-Belize campaign; all are invited to give feedback by emailing the Pesticides Control Board at growsafebelize@pcbbelize.com.

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