

Social media misled you about pesticides. A farmer explains what they are and how they protect our food

It seems that too many people don't realize that herbicides are considered a type of pesticide. All herbicides are pesticides, but not all pesticides are herbicides.

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When farmers apply chemicals, they often times must hold licenses, certifications, and go through ongoing training in order to apply. [This video](#) from the Peterson Farm Brothers does a great job explaining how it's done. And [this video](#) shows just how little is often used. The amount, frequency of application, and mode of action all contribute to impact and effectiveness, and the appropriate thresholds are determined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Farmers' crops are often tested for safety, and pesticides (also known as crop protection products) go through decades' worth of research to ensure effectiveness and safety. Farmers want to use as little as possible since it can be so expensive and time-consuming to apply them.

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One of my favorite analogies when it comes to agrochemical use is that plants are living and so are we. We need chemicals to survive — and everything is made of chemicals! Sunscreen is made of chemical compounds to protect us from the sun. We need bug spray to protect us from insect bites. We need medicine, food, and nutrients to survive. So do plants!

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