

Viewpoint: Environmental activists promote myth that farmers over-apply pesticides on US farmland

Activist groups and other organizations that go after conventional agriculture will lead you to believe that farmers are spraying the world to death. This notion is centered around pesticides, the overarching term for herbicides, insecticides, nematocides, fungicides, and other chemicals that are used to protect agricultural crops (and other plants) against pests and disease. The United States, the world's second-largest agricultural producer, applies about 1 billion pounds of pesticides throughout the country [every year](#).

One billion pounds sounds like a lot, but in reality, it isn't.

Even if all of those 1 billion pounds of pesticides were applied to only agriculture lands (which they aren't), it still works out to be less than 1.2 pounds of pesticides for each acre of farmland.

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Additionally, because pesticides are expensive, farmers typically can't afford to overapply! Even the "cheap" ones will cost you nearly \$10 an acre to purchase, not to mention the fuel and labor needed to apply them. Farming is a business, and additional expenses, even ones as seemingly small as \$10/acre, could make or break the budget that year (the average size of a U.S. farm is 445 acres). Over-application of pesticides is simply not an option for many farmers; it doesn't help the crops, and it hurts farmers' pockets.

[**This is an excerpt. Read the original post here**](#)