

In January 1995, the federal government announced a major reform of the pesticide regulation system. Environmental sustainability will be a major feature of the new system. It will allow public participation in the decision for registration, facilitate the registration of safer pesticides, develop a risk reduction policy including reduced use, and consider alternatives to chemical pesticides. It will provide farmers, foresters, and other users with new tools and strategies for preventative pest management that are effective, safe, and environmentally sustainable.

make the transition to more environmentally sustainable practices. Of this amount, \$34 million has been earmarked for national initiatives; \$104 million has been matched by equal funding from provinces under joint agreements.

Federal/provincial agreements on environmentally sustainable agriculture are helping producers design and implement activities focused on issues such as water quality, waste management, and soil conservation. Farmers are forming rural conservation clubs and developing environmental farm plans in Ontario, Prince Edward Island, and Quebec. In the Prairie provinces, the farmer-owned Wheat Pools have developed guides to environmental farm planning to be used in conjunction with other on-farm conservation planning processes. These initiatives help farmers identify their successes in effective environmental management and develop work plans to address potential risks. It is projected that from 10 000 to 12 000 of these plans will be completed in Ontario alone by the year 1997.

Producers in a number of provinces are developing codes of practice in order to demonstrate environmental stewardship. One example is British Columbia's Code of Agricultural Practice for Waste Management. It establishes strict production standards to control environmental degradation.

As the agricultural sector can be a source of water pollution, many activities aim to reduce impacts on water quality. St. Lawrence Vision 2000 is an action plan between the governments of Canada and Quebec designed to conserve, protect, and restore the St. Lawrence River. A component of this action plan addresses agricultural non-point source pollution from heavily farmed watersheds.

The agri-chemical industry is also involved in this area. Examples include the industry's Responsible Care program intended to reduce environmental impacts and health risks, the Crop Protection Institute's brochure entitled "Water in Trust," and the Ciba-Geigy video *Protecting Water Quality: Best Management Practices*.

Canada has instituted a number of soil conservation programs over the years. The Permanent Cover Program, for example, will ultimately convert some 0.5 million hectares of marginal, erosion-prone land in the Prairie provinces and northern British Columbia from annual crops (primarily grains) to sustainable land uses under permanent cover (primarily forage). It has also worked to achieve habitat conservation objectives.

Green Plan programs in most provinces address the issue of pesticides, where concerns are linked to water quality and impact on wildlife and biodiversity. Research efforts, through biotechnology as well as conventional techniques, include the development of disease- and pest-resistant crop varieties, reduction of pesticide use, and development of practices that integrate disease and pest control with crop and soil management practices (integrated pest management). For example, the development of biological controls for crop pests will be highlighted in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. In the Atlantic Region, several programs have assisted producers by providing safer and more efficient spraying technology and providing