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## Florida Solid and Hazardous Waste Regulation Handbook: Overview<sup>1</sup>

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Michael T. Olexa, Aaron Leviten, and Kelly Samek<sup>2</sup>

Federal law regulating the management of solid and hazardous wastes can be found in many different acts of Congress. The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) affects waste management, as does the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) and the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). No single comprehensive federal law for solid and hazardous waste management exists, although RCRA touches on most of the major issues.

There is also no single comprehensive state law that typically fills in the gaps and supplements federal law. In some cases, as in RCRA, the federal government delegates the responsibility for administering the statute to a state agency. In many instances, state law standards are stricter than federal standards. Consequently, although compliance with state law *may* ensure compliance with federal laws, the converse is not necessarily true. Because state and federal laws often have different purposes, the specific regulations may vary. For example, the federal government may regulate pesticides to protect consumers while the state regulates pesticides to

protect farmworkers. Both statutes regulate pesticides but for different reasons. Therefore, compliance with state regulations is not always sufficient to ensure compliance with federal regulations.

Local regulation may be stricter still. Counties and cities in Florida are becoming increasingly aware of the dangers posed by mismanagement of wastes and are concerned about having to bear a disproportionate share of the costs of such mismanagement. Local regulations are not covered here due to the number and diversity of those regulations throughout the state. We strongly recommend that you contact your local county and city commissions, as well as the local waste-planning agency, for detailed information about local waste management regulations.

If you have questions about whether you have complied with all applicable regulations, always ask, as it is well recognized in the American legal system that ignorance of the law is not an excuse. It is best to prevent a potential problem entirely. Next best is to investigate and correct a problem early. The least desirable option is to allow a problem to get out of

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  2. Michael T. Olexa, Professor in the Department of Food and Resource Economics and Director of the Agricultural Law Center, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, UF/IFAS, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL, and Member of the Florida Bar and Chair of the Agricultural Law Committee of the Florida Bar; Aaron Leviten, Attorney in Orlando and guest lecturer on pesticide litigation at the University of Florida; and Kelly Samek, 2003 graduate of the Levin College of Law at the University of Florida.

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control and to suffer the penalties. Not knowing or understanding the rules will not protect you from these penalties.

person as a result of reference to or reliance upon the information contained in this publication.

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This handbook is designed to provide an accurate, current, and authoritative summary of the principal Florida laws that directly or indirectly relate to agriculture. It should provide a basic overview of the many rights and responsibilities farmers and farmland owners have under Florida laws. The reader is provided information about these rights and responsibilities and the appropriate contacts for more detailed information. However, the reader should be aware that because the laws, administrative rulings, and court decisions on which this publication is based are subject to constant revision, portions of this publication could become outdated at any time. Many details of cited laws are also left out due to space limitations.

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