

# Pesticide Formulations: The Benefit of Interactive CORE Workshops

E.E. HARLOW

*University of Florida, IFAS, Duval County Extension, Jacksonville, FL*

In 2010, the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services indicated there were 2,571 licensed applicators and 1,777 pest control technicians in Duval County who needed General Standards or CORE training to renew their licenses. CORE requirements for renewal may include 2 or 4 h of training within a 1-year to 4-year period. To be approved for CORE training a class should include material on pesticide safety, handling, laws and regulations, off-site movement, formulations, and more.

Extension offices are the most common place applicators come to receive their CORE training. CORE training can be tedious for both the agents and the audience because the material may not always be interesting. In an effort to make CORE more exciting, the agent in Duval County created a hands-on pesticide formulation workshop. The workshop was originally developed from material created by a Washington State agent and Penn State specialist. In Duval County, the workshops have been formatted to fit a 2-h slot or a 1-h slot. The agent provided this workshop as part of her bi-annual 4-h technician training, at the Jacksonville annual Florida Turfgrass Association regional seminar, and as an invited speaker at the Florida Turfgrass Annual Conference. Over the year, 228 individuals participated in some variation of this workshop.

The first part of the curriculum focuses on the different types of pesticide formulations, and the second part of the curriculum gives participants a chance to mix household products representing different formulations and determine if they are compatible.

County offices would benefit from using this curriculum because it provides an interesting and flexible curriculum that keeps the audience interested. It also provides audiences with an understanding of different formulations and the importance of completing a jar test before chemicals are tank mixed. The negative aspects of this program depend on how much of the



Fig. 1. Students work in groups using household products to complete the incompatibility testing portion of the workshop.

program is being completed. If the applicators will be completing the pesticide compatibility mixing, then the set-up and clean-up can be tedious. The organizational aspect of this program is the most difficult component of the program. The agent also needs to be somewhat familiar with pesticide formulations to facilitate the workshop.

Overall, this has been a very beneficial addition to the Duval County pesticide safety program. The audience always seems to enjoy the interactive aspect of the program. At one particular program, the agent was approached by a chemical rep who said “they had never seen anything like this and thought it was a great idea.”