Practical Farmers of Iowa encourages farmers and rural landowners to make themselves visible to neighbors who apply pesticides and local cooperatives each year before spraying begins. Sending a letter can be formal and documented, but also personal and open.

These letters are offered as templates to use directly, or to help you craft your own, more personalized letter. Simply copy and paste the text into your own word document and amend the highlighted areas (or more) as needed.

Template 1

(farm letterhead at top)

Date

Neighbor’s address

Dear (Neighbor),

We are writing to ask that you use extra caution when spraying herbicides, pesticides and fungicides near our property. We are located at ADDRESS (coordinates or other field identification) and are listed on the IDALS Sensitive Crops Directory. Please only spray what is absolutely necessary, mind the wind speed and direction, lower the booms, and drive slowly. If at all possible, we would like to be notified prior to spraying so we can close the windows.

In the past few years we have had some trouble with pesticide drift. Use this space to describe past experience.

Please stop by to visit anytime; we’d be happy to show you around our land that we love so much. If you would pass this request along to the cooperatives or whomever you use for contract spraying, we would be very appreciative. We have visited several of the area cooperatives and will send letters, too.

Sincerely,

 Name
 phone number

Template 2

(farm letterhead at top)

Date

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter serves as a reminder to you and to your contracted sprayers, both air and ground, that we are a certified organic fruit and vegetable farm. MORE ABOUT FARM. Our farm is listed on the Sensitive Crops and Apiary directory, through the Iowa Department of Agriculture (IDALS). Our organic certification is secured through IDALS, as well.

Please remind any applicators who may be near our farm, located at address (coordinates or other field identification, to use extra caution when applying any chemicals within 2 miles of our farm. Please remind applicators to check wind direction and speed before applying any chemicals. We would appreciate the use of lowest booms and lowest speeds possible when near our farm to avoid the drifting of chemicals and we strongly recommend that no aerial application be used on any of the adjacent fields. We also ask that you remind any pilots you may contract with to avoid flying over our farm on their routes to and from other jobs due to the risk of potential leakage for application equipment.

It is important that you understand that our operation is highly susceptible to herbicides, fungicides and pesticides. Most of our annual vegetable crops would be significantly damaged by herbicides, including glyphosate, resulting in partial to complete crop loss. Pesticides and fungicides are equally damaging. Misapplication that results in contact with our food crops may render them unfit for consumption, requiring us to destroy them. In addition, fields that are impacted by sprays must be removed from organic production for three years, which will result in long-term financial harm. Pesticides may also harm pollinators (bees and other natives) that are necessary for our food production.

We appreciate your help in communicating our location and the sensitivity of our crops to your spray applicators. It is our hope that a few extra precautions up front can help us all avoid the time consuming and costly process of legal action if crops, livestock and bees are damaged from drift or overspray.

Please feel free to contact us if you would like to know more about our concerns or if you have concerns you wish to address with us. If it is possible, we would appreciate notification of anticipated spray dates/times in our area as well as a list of scheduled materials to be applied.

Sincerely,

name

business

contact info