PUBLIC SAFETY AWARENESS REPORT
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
OFFICE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT ENGAGEMENT

(U) PREPARED BY THE FBI OFFICE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT ENGAGEMENT, CRIMINAL DIVISION, FBI PORTLAND, FBI LOS ANGELES, LABORATORY DIVISION, U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DIVISION, AND HIDTA MARIJUANA IMPACT GROUP

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(U) Nationwide Threat: Smuggled, Illegal Chinese-Labeled Pesticide Products at Marijuana Grows Pose Health and Environmental Hazard

(U) SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

(U) This Public Safety Awareness Report (PSAR) highlights health hazards associated with illegal Chinese-labeled[a] pesticide fumigants and provides investigative considerations. States that legalized medicinal or recreational commercial cannabis activities continue to experience increases in Chinese-labeled pesticide fumigants observed at licensed and unlicensed Chinese-operated private-land marijuana grows, in rural residential communities, commercial warehouses, former and active agricultural properties, remote areas near public lands, and properties near military bases. These Chinese-labeled pesticides may pose a health hazard to workers living on-site, law enforcement personnel during eradication operations, emergency responders during fire incidents, and the surrounding communities, marijuana consumers, and wildlife. Exposure to active fumigation of the

[a] (U) See Appendix A: Pesticide Registration and Pesticide Product Labels.

Chinese-labeled pesticides have led to hospitalization of law enforcement officers for symptoms such as skin, eye, and throat irritation, persistent headaches, chest pain, nose bleeds, and extreme fatigue.

- (U) In mid-2023, northern California Siskiyou County Sheriff notified the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) that law enforcement and regulatory personnel were unknowingly encountering Chinese-labeled pesticides at illicit marijuana grows. CalEPA requested assistance from the California National Guard's Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) 95th Civil Support Team (95th CST) for rapid chemical identification of the Chinese-labeled pesticide products to address health and safety concerns related to law enforcement exposures. The 95th CST determined the Chinese pesticide products contain mixtures of highly toxic pesticide compounds, with 23 pesticides initially identified and up to 13 different pesticides in one packet of combustible sawdust burned as a fumigant at grow sites. To date, an additional nine pesticides have been identified, bringing the total to 32 pesticides.[b] None of the 32 pesticides identified in the Chinese-labeled products are currently registered by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for use as fumigants in any registered pesticide product in the United States.

- (U) In October 2025, Washington State Patrol (WSP) discovered the use of Chinese-labeled pesticides while conducting an enforcement operation at a marijuana grow in Douglas County, Washington. WSP noted the similarity of Chinese-labeled pesticides to those seized in Siskiyou County, California, and reported the use of a humidifier to disperse unidentified vapors, potentially liquid pesticides, into a grow room.

- (U) In January 2025, Chinese-labeled pesticides were found during an FBI and EPA CID Albuquerque, New Mexico, operation at illegal marijuana grow sites. During the operation, FBI and EPA CID personnel, Task Force Officers, and other law enforcement officers were potentially exposed to toxic pesticides.

- (U) Following a May 2025 search warrant in Siskiyou County, California, six law enforcement officers were hospitalized due to exposure to active fumigation of Chinese-labeled pesticides. Additional reported symptoms following the exposure included skin and throat irritation, chest pain, persistent headaches, uncontrollable sweating, nose bleeds, and extreme fatigue.

- (U) In May 2026, two workers at a registered medical marijuana grow operation in Seminole, Oklahoma, were charged with smuggling and conspiracy to smuggle unregistered and misbranded Chinese-labeled pesticides into the country, along with unlawful distribution and sale of pesticides.

[b] (U) See Appendix B: Pesticides Identified in the Chinese-Labeled Fumigant Products in Siskiyou County, California, as of July 9, 2026.

(U) Identification of Chinese-Labeled Pesticide Fumigants

(U) First responder recognition of illegal Chinese pesticides and precursors will improve public safety. The illegal Chinese-labeled pesticides are being smuggled into the United States through major ports of entry and transported via commercial trucking networks. Once in the United States, they are illegally sold and distributed through Chinese-operated hydroponic supply stores, residential homes, and online Chinese marketplaces.

(U) Chinese-labeled pesticide fumigant products are typically packaged in multicolored mylar bags with either printed or sticker labels. Each mylar bag contains individual packets of combustible, chemically treated sawdust that may also contain small white granules of ammonium nitrate.

- (U) Regardless of any foreign registration numbers that may be present on labels, pesticides must be registered with EPA for use in the United States, which includes having an EPA Registration Number and a product label in English. Products exclusively labeled with non-English descriptions may be an early indicator of illegal activity.[c]
- (U) Chinese-labeled fumigant products with sticker labels (for example, labels you can peel off) may indicate that the pesticide product is illicit both in the United States and in China due to complete lack of registration. The mylar bags with sticker labels often contain a QR code that leads to the seller or an online marketplace.

(U) Chinese Fumigant Examples



(U//FOUO) Photo 1: Mylar Bags with Sticker Label (Top Row) and Printed Label (Bottom Row). These Chinese-labeled pesticide fumigant products were observed at Chinese operated grow sites throughout the United States.



(U//FOUO) Photo 2: Chinese Pesticide with Printed Label and PD #. In China's pesticide registration system, "PD" is the code for a domestically registered agricultural (field-use) pesticide under full registration status.

Source: CalEPA

[c] (U) See Appendix A: Pesticide Registration and Pesticide Product Labels.

(U) Combustible Sawdust Fumigants

(U) Combustible sawdust is coated or saturated with multiple toxic pesticide classes, including carbamates, organophosphates, pyrethroids, and fungicides, and is accompanied by separate "wick" packets composed of sulfur or other contaminants.

(U) The sawdust is placed in an open metal container (for example, an aluminum food or soda can cut in half), and the "wick" is placed in the center. The "fumigation cans" are then placed on the ground throughout the hoop house or other enclosed structure and ignited. As these illicit materials burn, they release highly toxic fumes that pose a threat to the workers living on-site, law enforcement personnel during eradication operations, emergency responders during fire incidents, the surrounding communities, marijuana consumers, and wildlife.

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(U//FOUO) Photo 3: Sawdust Packets and Packet of Wicks

Source: CalEPA





(U//FOUO) Photo 4: Sawdust Packet with Aluminum Can and Wick Used as a Fumigant in Marijuana Grow

Source: CalEPA

(U) Response Guidance:
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Operational Considerations:

(U) Pesticide exposures to law enforcement officers from active fumigation smoke during eradication operations have resulted in significant acute symptoms and hospitalizations. Law enforcement officers whose duties include marijuana eradication operations should follow their department or agency's standard operating procedures (SOP) for use of proper PPE. The following are operational considerations:

- (U) Law enforcement making initial entry should wear PPE in full compliance with their department or agency's SOP; this may include full face respirators with CBRN cartridges. The specific type of full-face respirator (for example, self-contained breathing apparatus vs air purifying respirator) should be selected based on the hazards present. Entry should not be made if there are signs of active burning/fumigation smoke. **Contact your local HAZMAT emergency response team for consult or response to grow sites that are being actively fumigated.**

- (U) If active fumigation must be extinguished due to its proximity and potential to cause harm, entry should be made in Level A PPE (vapor-protective ensembles) by a properly trained HAZMAT team capable of managing complex, large-scale or "chemical unknown" incidents that require advanced identification tools and extensive perimeter monitoring.

- (U) After the scene has been secured, department or agency SOP PPE such as an N95 may be sufficient, barring any other hazards that may require full-face respiratory protection. *NOTE:* **If the marijuana plants look wet from suspected liquid pesticide application, full face respirators are still required.**

- (U) Nerve agent antidotes (Atropine and 2-PAM Chloride) in addition to CYANOKITs and Naloxone should be available during eradication operations alongside properly trained medical personnel.
- (U) Ventilation should be initiated at the earliest possible point. For indoor grows, open all the doors and windows. Consider using on-site fans to create a push-pull circulation system to expedite the ventilation process.

- (U) Avoid cross contamination. Clothing and footwear worn at the scene should be considered contaminated along with any surface within the grow structure that may have come into contact with the fumigation smoke.

- (U) Consider regular cholinesterase testing for exposures to pesticides. Due to the possibility of delayed symptoms resulting from chronic pesticide exposure, law enforcement personnel should complete exposure reports after every eradication operation (and maintain copies for your own record).

- (U) Certified results from various accredited testing labs demonstrate that the pesticides identified in the Chinese-labeled fumigant products are still present post-application on the marijuana plants and processed cannabis products.

(U) Investigatory Considerations:

- (U) Law enforcement personnel should identify the appropriate pesticide/environmental agency contacts (federal, state, and local) in advance and invest in building mutually beneficial working relationships and routine information sharing, subject to legal and confidentiality requirements. Establishing these connections early on (instead of when you need them) is critical to effective coordination and successful multi-agency investigations.

- (U) If not already a part of the investigation, consider notifying the EPA, any state and local equivalents such as environmental, public health, and pesticide/agricultural agencies, and your local FBI WMD coordinator. For assistance with identifying the appropriate agencies within your respective jurisdiction, contact your regional HIDTA office or the National Coordinator for the Marijuana Impact Group. *(See "Resources" section).*

- (U) Record locations where Chinese-labeled pesticides are observed/found.

- (U) Shipping labels on boxes and paperwork or similar records may indicate where the illegal pesticides came from or to whom they were sent.

- (U) Look for documents, business cards, agricultural equipment, and agricultural supplies that identify a hydroponic supply store, Chinese website (i.e., online marketplace), or shipping/trucking company.

- (U) Identify limited liability companies (LLCs) and corporations tied to the same individuals and addresses.

- (U) For laboratory analysis of evidentiary samples related to Chinese pesticide fumigant products, agencies should confirm a laboratory's capabilities in advance to ensure it has validated methods for, at minimum, the pesticides most frequently observed, and ideally the full list of pesticides identified in the Chinese-labeled fumigant products. See Appendix B for a list of pesticides identified to date.

- (U) To archive recoverable labels for investigative leads, law enforcement officers should take photos that include:
    - (U) A wide shot of illegal pesticide products.
    - (U) Clear close-up photos of all sides of the foreign-labeled pesticide product, including the packaging and product label. If there's a QR code, take clear unobstructed photos for scanning purposes.

(U) RESOURCES

- (U) To report any leads, threats, and suspected criminal activity, you may also visit https://tips.fbi.gov/ or contact your local FBI Office: https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us or your local FBI WMD Coordinator: https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/wmd.

  (U) Note: *This website cannot be used to report emergencies or immediate threat to life. For emergencies or immediate threat to life, please call 911.*

- (U) To report suspected illegal pesticide related activity to the EPA visit https://epa.gov/tips.

  (U) Note: *This website cannot be used to report emergencies or immediate threat to life. For emergencies or immediate threat to life, please call 911.*

- (U) We also encourage the law enforcement use of the unclassified information sharing system **eGuardian** for reporting suspicious activity reports (SARs) to the FBI. Access eGuardian via the Law Enforcement Enterprise Portal (LEEP): https://www.cjis.gov/. If the information is urgent in nature, then please contact your local FBI field office directly and follow up with an eGuardian report.
- (U) For local and state enforcement coordination assistance related to Chinese-labeled pesticides or to request training on the Chinese-labeled pesticide threat (and other chemical hazards associated with commercial cannabis activities), contact your regional HIDTA office or the National Coordinators for the Marijuana Impact Group (MIG): rxroggeveen@nhac.org and hxjavid@nhac.org. For more information about the MIG, go to: https://themig.org/
- (U) Poison Control Center/America's Poison Centers (1-800-222-1222): Offers 24/7 expert consultation on suspected pesticide exposures, including symptom triage, immediate treatment recommendations, and guidance on when to transport or escalate care. For more information, go to: https://www.poison.org/
- (U) For more information on the symptoms of suspected pesticide exposures, the following resources exist:
    - (U) Department of Transportation's Emergency Response Guidebook: https://www.phmsa.dot.gov/training/hazmat/erg/emergency-response-guidebook-erg
    - (U) EPA's Recognition and Management of Pesticide Poisonings Manual: https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-worker-safety/recognition-and-management-pesticide-poisonings
    - (U) The National Pesticide Information Center: https://npic.orst.edu/

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(U) APPENDIX A: PESTICIDE REGISTRATION AND PESTICIDE PRODUCT LABELS

(U) The Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), Title 7 United States Code § 136-136y, authorizes the U.S. EPA to regulate the distribution, sale, production and use of pesticides in the United States. U.S. EPA enforces both civil and criminal violations of FIFRA; however, although the sale and distribution of an unregistered pesticide is a violation under FIFRA it is important to note that there is no violation for use/misuse of an unregistered pesticide. That type of violation is typically established under state law and, depending on the jurisdiction, may be chargeable as a felony.

(U) The U.S. EPA's registration process includes a scientific evaluation to determine the safety of the chemicals in the pesticide product. Through the registration process, a legally enforceable product label is created.

(U) Product labels making pesticidal claims must meet the requirements under Code of Federal Regulation (CFR), Title 40, Chapter I, Subchapter E, Part 156.10 and be registered with the U.S. EPA in addition to the appropriate state agency, if applicable to your respective state.

(U) Unless exempted, pesticide products registered with the U.S. EPA must have an EPA Registration Number listed on the product label in addition to being in the language most spoken in the United States (English) per 40 CFR 156.10(a)(3). No pesticide products *registered* in the United States are labeled *solely* in a non-English language.

(U) Due to marijuana being federally illegal, there are no U.S. EPA registered pesticide products for use on cannabis. As a result, individual states must establish their own criteria for pesticides that are approved for use on cannabis which cannot be less stringent than federal law.

(U) APPENDIX B: PESTICIDES[d] IDENTIFIED IN THE CHINESE-LABELED FUMIGANT PRODUCTS IN SISKIYOU COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, AS OF JULY 9, 2026

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CAS	Pesticide
122453-73-0	Chlorfenapyr
1897-45-6	Chlorothalonil (Tetrachloroisophthalonitrile)
2921-88-2	Chlorpyriphos
21923-23-9	Chlorthiophos
56-72-4	Coumaphos
67375-30-8	Cypermethrin (alpha)
52315-07-8	Cypermethrin (beta and zeta)
80060-09-9	Diafenthiuron
62-73-7	Dichlorvos
88-85-7	Dinoseb
153233-91-1	Etoxazole
3766-81-2	Fenobucarb (BPMC)
39515-41-8	Fenpropathrin
98886-44-3	Fosthiazate
3878-19-1	Fuberidazole
118-74-1	Hexachlorobenzene
138261-41-3	Imidacloprid

[d] (U) The listed pesticides were contained in the Chinese-labeled products found in Siskiyou County, CA in July 2026.

36734-19-7	Iprodione
2631-40-5	Isoprocarb (MIPC)
91465-08-6	Lambda-cyhalothrin
16752-77-5	Methomyl
556-61-6	Methyl Isothiocyanate (MITC)
52-68-6	Metrifonate (Trichlorfon)
300-76-5	Naled
82-68-8	Pentachloronitrobenzene (PCNB)
32809-16-8	Procymidone
41198-08-7	Profenofos
96489-71-3	Pyridaben
53112-28-0	Pyrimethanil
107534-96-3	Tebuconazole
36734-19-7	Thiophanate-Methyl
81412-43-3	Tridemorph

PSAR Product Feedback Form

Fill in the below fields with as much detail as possible.

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PSAR PRODUCT ID:	
PSAR USE: **How do you plan to use the information in this PSAR to support your agency's public safety mission?**	☐ *Observe, identify, and/or disrupt threats* ☐ *Share with law enforcement, intelligence, and/or homeland security partners* ☐ *Allocate more resources (e.g., personnel, equipment)* ☐ *Initiate your own analysis in developing an analytical product* ☐ *To better understand or reprioritize law enforcement investigations* ☐ *Author or adjust policies, guidelines, preparedness efforts, training, and other response plans* ☐ *Do not plan to use* ☐ *Other:*
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