



Citrus Orchard Foreman Occupational Learning

Work Scenario Guide

J1: Agrochemical Management

Qualification:	110667 – Occupational Certificate: Orchard and Vineyard Foreman
Work Scenario:	J1: Agrochemical Management
Learning Area:	J: Oversee the management of production stock and consumables
Scenario Description:	You need to oversee the safe handling, application and storage of agrochemicals, to ensure a safe working environment, maximum fruit quality, and adherence to market requirements.

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Alignment Information

Qualification

The content of this learner guide is aligned to the following occupational qualification:

SAQA QUAL ID	Qualification Title			
110667	Occupational Certificate: Orchard and Vineyard Foreman			
Originator				
Development Quality Partner – AgriSETA				
Primary Or Delegated Quality Assurance Functionary			NQF Sub-Framework	
-			OQSF - Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework	
QUALIFICATION TYPE		FIELD		SUBFIELD
Occupational Certificate		Field 01 - Agriculture and Nature Conservation		Primary Agriculture
Abet Band	Minimum Credits	Pre-2009 NQF Level	NQF Level	Qual Class
Undefined	147	Not Applicable	NQF Level 04	Regular-ELOAC

Modules

The content of this learner guide is aligned to the following modules of the occupational qualification above.

Module Code	Module Title	Level	Credits
Knowledge Modules			
611202-001-00-KM-01	Plant Structure and Physiology	4	5
611202-001-00-KM-02	Vineyard or Orchard Establishment	3	2
611202-001-00-KM-03	Vineyard or Orchard Manipulation Processes	3	8
611202-001-00-KM-04	Harvesting	3	4
611202-001-00-KM-05	Basic Principles of Plant Nutrition	4	4
611202-001-00-KM-06	Crop Protection	3	3
611202-001-00-KM-07	Assets in Horticultural Production	3	2
611202-001-00-KM-08	Farm Business Management and Farming Process Management	4	8
611202-001-00-KM-09	Human Resource Management and Processes	4	8
611202-001-00-KM-10	Overseeing Farming Resource Utilisation	4	8
Practical Skill Modules			
611202-001-00-PM-01	Organise, Allocate and Monitor Availability and Productive Use of Resources	4	5
611202-001-00-PM-2a	Set Team and Individual Performance Goals to Enhancing Team Performance	4	10
611202-001-00-PM-2b	Control Vineyard or Orchard Practices	4	10

611202-001-00-PM-03	Supply Accurate Daily Orchard or Vineyard and Production Information	4	10
Work Experience Modules			
611202-001-00-WM-01	Vineyard or Orchard Resource Optimisation	4	20
611202-001-00-WM-02	Skilled and Motivated Work Team Output	4	20
611202-001-00-WM-03	Daily Orchard or Vineyard and Production Information Availability	4	20

Learning Outcomes

The content of this learner guide is aligned to the following learning outcomes of the modules above.

Knowledge Topics	
Outcome Code	Module Title
KM-10-KT03	Stock control
IAC0313	The legislation regarding the handling and storage of Agri-chemicals are outlined
IAC0314	The safe use and storage of Agri-chemicals are described in terms of particular chemicals
IAC0315	The safe disposal of Agri-chemicals is described in terms of specific chemicals
IAC0316	Good housekeeping in the chemical store is outlined
Practical Skills	
PM-01-PS03	Organise and allocate equipment and agri-chemicals to the work team to perform Vineyard or orchard practices
IAC0303	The quantity of agri-chemicals is correct according to the size of the Vineyard or orchard
PA0302	Describe the process of the production unit to organize availability of equipment and chemicals (draw from the store)
PA0305	Describe the process of sound stock control during operations in a unit

Chapter 1

General Safety

learning outcomes

The content of this chapter is aimed at helping you to:

- Safely handle agrochemicals.

1. Introduction to Agrochemical Safety

During the complex process of farming citrus, farmers use many different chemical products. These include fertilisers, herbicides and pest control chemicals used in the nursery and on the farm, chemical treatments used in the packhouse, and chemicals used to clean and sanitise work areas, to name just a few examples. These chemical products are referred to as agrochemicals, meaning chemicals used in agriculture.

There is a wide range of agrochemicals that you and your workers will handle, and all agrochemicals can be dangerous to humans, animals and plants. Further, all agrochemicals can damage the environment if they are, for example, allowed to get into waterways or into the soil.

Even agrochemicals classified as safe can be harmful to your health – it is all a question of how much you are exposed to and how you are exposed. After all, water, something we need to drink to survive, can still be dangerous if you drown in it.

Different agrochemicals can pose a danger to you in different ways. Remember that many agrochemicals, like pest control chemicals and herbicides, are made specifically to kill living things like pest insects and weeds, so some of them can be poisonous to humans or animals when they are swallowed – what we call “ingested”.

Others can cause chemical burns or even poison you when they come into contact with your skin. Another great danger is inhaling certain agrochemicals while they are being sprayed in orchards. Others are very dangerous when, for instance, you get them in your eyes.

Agrochemicals must be stored and always used with safety in mind. In this material we will look at how we protect ourselves, others and the environment when using agrochemicals, and how we store agrochemicals safely.

2. Occupational Health and Safety

Every workplace in South Africa – in our case every nursery, farm and packhouse – must adhere to the requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Under this Act there are very specific regulations for how all chemicals that are used in that workplace must be used and stored. Workers must receive regular training on the requirements of the Act and the Act itself must be printed out and put up on a wall in the workplace. Have a look at it, and make sure that you comply with the law.

There are also other requirements and regulations that citrus producers and packhouses must adhere to if they want to export citrus fruit. There is for instance the GlobalGAP accreditation system and the SIZA programme. Both of these require that the workplace must have a health and safety management system. Workers should also be trained about what they are required to do to comply with the system.

Communication is a critical part of a successful health and safety management system. Workers must not only know the hazards that they face in the workplace but also what to do in the event of an accident or emergency. Always remember that these regulations and systems are put in place to protect you. It is important that you play your part in making sure that you stay safe and healthy in the workplace.

3. Protective Equipment and Clothing

Protective equipment and clothing are the first things that your workers need to keep themselves safe when working with agrochemicals. Protective equipment and clothing are designed to prevent workers from ingesting or inhaling agrochemicals and from getting agrochemicals on their skin. How much and what kind of protection you need depends on the agrochemical you are working with.

All agrochemicals are classified according to how dangerous they are. This is shown on the label of the agrochemical, where we can also see what protective equipment and clothing we need to wear when working with that particular agrochemical. Always follow the instructions on the label, no matter what!

4. Types of Protective Equipment and Clothing

Workers must know how to put on and use protective equipment and clothing correctly, and that it must be the right size for them. It is no use wearing a respirator that fits loosely or rubber gloves that are too big and keep falling off. All workers that come into contact with agrochemicals must have the following protective equipment and clothing available to them:

4.1. Cotton Overalls

The best option is a two-piece overall. Overalls are worn just about all the time when working on a farm. Cotton provides better protection and is more durable than those made from lightweight synthetic fabric.

4.2. Rubber Boots

Rubber boots are also worn most of the time on a farm, but are especially important when working with agrochemicals. Rubber boots are watertight and strong.

4.3. Apron

An apron is worn while mixing agrochemicals to protect you in case of spillage.

4.4. Raincoat and Hat

A raincoat and hat are worn while spraying agrochemicals, to protect from skin contact. You can also wear other forms of protection like hazmat suits, but these may be expensive and bulky.

4.5. Goggles

Goggles are used to protect a worker's eyes while they are mixing agrochemicals and sometimes when they are applying them.

4.6. Rubber Gloves

Rubber gloves prevent skin contact with agrochemicals while they are being mixed and applied.

4.7. Face Mask

A face mask offers protection against inhaling agrochemicals.

4.8. Respirators

Some agrochemicals are even more dangerous when inhaled and a respirator is used in those cases.

5. Maintenance of Protective Equipment and Clothing

Protective equipment and clothing will only protect you if it is clean, whole and working properly. Make sure that your overalls, gloves, boots, apron, raincoat, rain hat and face mask are whole and do not have any rips or tears. A hole or tear can bring the agrochemical into contact with your skin, and it can cause poisoning or a chemical burn.

One of the requirements of a health and safety management system is regular inspection of protective equipment and clothing. Workers are responsible for checking their protective equipment and clothing regularly, but this must be followed up by spot checks by the health and safety officer.

Best practice is to wash clothes and equipment immediately after it is used. This way you can be sure that it is clean when you need to use it again, and it will also stop agrochemicals from being absorbed by the clothing.

Protective equipment and clothing that is badly damaged and no longer effective must be replaced. Rather be safe than sorry – better to replace an item too soon than too late and risk injury.

6. Preventing Soil and Water Contamination

Farmers have a very particular responsibility to protect the environment and land from which they make their living. Pollution is very damaging to the environment, and a major source of pollution on a farm is agrochemicals that are not handled properly.

Remember that all agrochemicals can cause damage to the environment if they are at a high enough concentration, even if they seem to be harmless. This is why we must prevent accidents that can lead to agrochemicals getting into the soil and water supply, and why we must minimise the amount of runoff agrochemicals when they are being applied.

To limit this, chemical storage and mixing facilities should be constructed at least fifty meters away from natural water sources, even boreholes. To limit soil contamination, chemical mixing areas must also have a separate drainage system where chemicals can be trapped and contained. In a later module we will look at this in more detail.

7. Emergency Procedures

The workplace should have clear, written procedures for how agrochemicals must be handled to prevent them from getting into the water supply and the soil, and from posing a danger to wild animals, workers and all other humans that are on the farm. All workers that handle agrochemicals must be trained on these procedures.

Firstly, workers must know what to do every day when they work with agrochemicals to stay safe and to prevent emergencies. But no matter how careful we are, it is sometimes impossible to keep emergencies from happening. When it does happen, we must know what to do to minimise the damage caused by the incident.

7.1. Poisoning

Poisoning is the first emergency incident that we will look at. Poisoning can happen not only when an agrochemical is swallowed, or ingested, but also with some agrochemicals when they are absorbed through the skin or inhaled.

Firstly, you should try to build a relationship with the local doctor and other medical facilities. You should provide the doctor with an up-to-date list of the agrochemicals stored and used in the workplace so that he can have the right antidotes available in case of an emergency.

The second important thing is to have a trained first aid officer in the workplace. A first aid officer is trained to recognise different poisoning symptoms and can react immediately if someone gets in trouble. All workers that come into contact with agrochemicals should know the symptoms of poisoning.

You should create or purchase posters that show the symptoms of poisoning and display these anywhere where people work with agrochemicals.

If anyone develops poisoning symptoms, the first aid officer must be called immediately. After the first aid officer is called, you should arrange for medical attention as soon as possible. This may involve calling the doctor to come to the farm or arranging for the worker to be taken to the hospital or clinic.

While this is being done, the first aid officer will follow a set procedure. First, they should try to find out which agrochemical caused the poisoning. Once they know which agrochemical is involved, they should consult the label for specific first aid procedures.

After consulting the label, they should try to determine how the agrochemical was taken in. This could be through ingestion, contact (such as with the skin or eyes), or inhalation. This information should be shared with the doctor or clinic the worker is treated by.

Throughout this process, the first aid officer should make sure that the poisoned worker's breathing tract is open, and that the patient is warm. If the patient is unconscious, they should turn him or her onto their stomach. If the patient is not breathing, they should start artificial respiration.

If the patient absorbed the chemical via the skin, they should remove the patient from the contamination point, remove all contaminated clothing and wash affected areas with soap and water.

If the patient's eyes have been affected, these should be washed with clean water for at least fifteen minutes. If the chemicals have been swallowed do not make the person vomit unless it specifically says so on the product label.

7.2. Spillage

The second type of emergency incident that you have to prepare for is spillage, or leakage. Even if workers are really careful when handling chemicals, spillages or leakages can still occur. It is important to have the right equipment available so that the damage can be limited. As part of their health and safety training, workers who work with agrochemicals must be trained on how to deal with spillages and leakages.

To handle spills or leaks quickly and effectively, you need to make sure that the following tools and equipment are always available:

- Extra sets of protective clothing, including respirators and face masks
- Brooms and shovels
- Powdered lime
- Sand or soil
- Open-top drums in which to put spilled chemicals

If a spill or leak occurs, as with a poisoning, there is a specific procedure you should follow. Firstly, you must give first aid to anyone that might have been in contact with or poisoned by the agrochemical. Once you are absolutely sure that any affected workers are being treated, you can then deal with the spill or leak.

First, you should isolate the area where the spill occurred, and keep all unauthorised people away. Before you begin cleaning up, make sure that every worker involved in the clean-up is wearing the appropriate protective clothing.

To contain the spill, you should construct an absorbent barrier of sand, soil or lime around the spilled chemical. Ideally, this barrier should soak up the chemical. Take any leaking containers and place them into the open-top drums. Label these drums clearly to indicate the chemical inside.

Use shovels and brooms to collect the soil, sand or lime with the agrochemical absorbed in it. Put this material into open-top drums for disposal, and label them clearly.

If the spill was indoors, ventilate the building by opening all the doors and windows. If the spillage was on soil or gravel, dig up the area and remove the contaminated soil. If the spillage was on concrete, neutralise the agrochemical with lime, sodium carbonate or sodium hydroxide, depending on the chemical that was spilled.

Once you are done, clean all equipment used during the clean-up operation thoroughly, including laundering protective clothing, and store it for future use.

Take the open-top drums containing the chemical-containing sand or leaky containers and dispose of them in a responsible manner. Depending on the agrochemical, you might need to contact a specialised company that handles chemical disposal.

summary

Chapter 1 - General Safety

- Agrochemicals are the chemicals used in agriculture, and include fertilisers, herbicides and pest control chemicals.
- All agrochemicals can be dangerous to humans, animals and plants.
- Every workplace in South Africa must adhere to the requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act.
- Necessary protective clothing and equipment for agrochemical management include cotton overalls, rubber boots, aprons, rain coats, hats, goggles, rubber gloves, face mask, and respirators.
- Protective equipment and clothing will only protect you if it is clean, whole and working properly.
- Clothes and equipment should be washed immediately after being used.
- Protective equipment and clothing that is badly damaged and no longer effective must be replaced.
- Chemical storage and mixing facilities should be constructed at least fifty meters away from natural water sources, even boreholes.
- Chemical mixing areas must also have a separate drainage system where chemicals can be trapped and contained.

- Poisoning can happen when an agrochemical is ingested, absorbed through the skin or inhaled.
- You should build a relationship with your local doctor and provide them with an up-to-date list of the agrochemicals stored and used in the workplace.
- You must have a first aid officer in the workplace that is trained to recognise different poisoning symptoms and can react immediately if someone gets in trouble.
- To handle spills or leaks quickly and effectively, you need to make sure that you have extra sets of protective clothing, brooms, shovels, powdered lime, sand or soil, and open-top drums.
- To contain a spill, you should construct an absorbent barrier of sand, soil or lime around the spilled chemical.

assessment activities

- ✓ **Activity P1:** Complete this activity to test your knowledge of general agrochemical safety.

Chapter 2

Agrochemical Storage

learning outcomes

The content of this chapter is aimed at helping you to:

- Safely store agrochemicals in a well-organised, efficient manner.

1. Introduction to Agrochemical Storage

All agrochemicals, including plant protection products, fertilisers, herbicides and cleaning products, must be handled with the greatest care. Agrochemicals are not only potentially toxic to humans, but can also harm animals and pollute water sources and soil. Storing agrochemicals properly is essential to making sure that we have a safe working environment.

The rules for the storing agrochemicals safely are prescribed by Good Agricultural Practices regulations and by certification organisations like GlobalGAP. There are a few general principles that most of these organisations would recommend.

Firstly, agrochemicals must be stored in a secure, well-ventilated, cool, dry building that cannot be accessed by children, animals or unauthorised personnel. There must be easy access to washing facilities with running water, soap and towels. An eye-flushing bottle must be available in the event that eyes are contaminated.

The storeroom must have a smooth, level cement floor, and warning signs must be placed on the outside of the storeroom that clearly show that it is an agrochemical storeroom. The storeroom must have at least two 9kg dry-powder fire extinguishers on hand, placed outside the storeroom.

No food products, animal feed or seeds may be taken into the storeroom, and no eating, drinking or smoking should be allowed inside the storeroom.

In terms of organisation, different types of agrochemicals (such as pesticides, fungicides, herbicides and growth-regulators) must be separated in the storeroom. Ideally each type should have its own area (such as a specific shelf) and each of these storage areas must be clearly labelled so that products cannot be mixed by accident.

Herbicides should preferably be stored completely separately to all other agrochemicals. Powders and granular products must be stored apart from liquid products to avoid contamination in the event of spillage.

A good way to group the agrochemicals in the store is according to their hazard potential. For example, store red-band agrochemicals, meaning those in group 1a and 1b, in the same part of the store.

In terms of using products, this should be used on a first-in-first-out basis. This means that you should always use the oldest chemicals first, as this will help to make sure that agrochemicals are used before reaching their expiry date.

Bags and containers that are not on shelves should be stacked on pallets to prevent moisture from building up. All containers and bags must be marked properly. If a label is destroyed or lost, mark the container with a marking pen, clearly stating its contents. The label should always be visible.

Containers with agrochemicals that have been opened and partly used should be resealed and returned to the store. Bulk tanks that are used for products such as spray oil should be placed in a dam that has a greater volume than that of the tank, so that the spillage can be contained if the tank should leak or rupture.

A stock movement recordkeeping system that shows the quantities of each agrochemical purchased, issued and returned must be in place. From the recordkeeping system, one should be able to determine the exact type and quantity of agrochemicals on hand at any given time.

2. Safety Signs

Signage is a very important part of storing agrochemicals safely. Adequate, easily visible signs must be put up where agrochemicals are stored and used. These signs should comply with regulatory requirements in terms of design. Signs can serve many purposes, such as giving you information or clear instructions on what to do or not to do, in a way that is understandable no matter what language you speak.

The most common types of signs include:

- Danger
- No entry
- No smoking
- No drinking and eating
- Fire extinguisher
- First aid equipment
- Emergency exit
- Protective clothing required
- Do not drink the water from this tap

3. Agrochemical Identification

Now that we know what the storeroom should look like, let's talk about how we can identify different agrochemicals to ensure that they are stored in the right place. Firstly, it is against the law to use products that are not officially registered and permitted in the country of use, or to use a product on crops that it is not registered for.

You should only purchase and use products from trustworthy sources, such as reputable manufacturers or suppliers. It is important to know how to read the labels of agrochemicals, because this is where you can find all the information we need.

All agrochemicals are approved and registered with the Department of Agriculture (DoA). The product label is part of the registration of the agrochemical. Let's discuss the information that should be on a label.

Firstly, there should be full instructions on how to use the chemical, together with detailed information on the uses for which the product is registered. Read these instructions carefully and follow them strictly. This will make sure that we get the best results and that people and the environment are not put in danger. It is against the law to use an agrochemical in a manner for which it is not registered.

Next, a physical description of the product should be present, including its colour and whether it is a fluid, powder or granules. The crop protection manager should look at the agrochemical in the container to make sure that it answers to this physical description. If not and the container has never been opened before, the manufacturer or supplier must be

contacted immediately. If the container has been opened before, the container and its contents must be discarded, as prescribed.

The chemical composition of the product, and the toxicity of the product, along with instructions for how to handle it safely, will also be on the label. Pay close attention to this information.

Next, the pre-harvest interval (or PHI) of the product. The PHI, also known as the withholding period, is the period after application of the agrochemical during which the fruit may not be harvested. PHIs vary considerably from agrochemical to agrochemical and must be checked by the crop protection manager when he compiles the crop protection program.

Finally, the label will list the product expiry date, being the date on or before which the agrochemical should be used. Agrochemicals must be used before the expiry date to make sure that it is still effective.

4. Hazard Classification

Agrochemicals are classified in terms of their toxicity in five groups, from group one for the most dangerous agrochemicals, to group five for agrochemicals that are unlikely to cause harm to humans if used in the normal way. There is also a colour band for each group, and the first four groups also have hazard statements.

Internationally recognised symbols are used to indicate the toxicity of chemicals in groups one and two. Advice pictograms indicate what steps to take to protect yourself against contamination. In particular, it shows what protective gear and clothing to use.

Warning pictograms are used if the agrochemical is dangerous or harmful to particular types of animals, or if it shouldn't be applied in a particular way, such as by crop sprayers.

5. Sanitation

The agrochemical store, the area around it and the protective gear and clothing that is used when agrochemicals are handled or applied must be kept clean and sanitised to limit the chance of contamination.

There must be a wash trough or large basin close to the agrochemical store; so that workers can wash their protective gear and clothing on site and immediately after it is used. Equipment, such as scoops, buckets and measuring cups, must be washed at the end of the workday.

6. Disposal of Contaminated Items

Empty chemical containers must under no circumstances be reused for any purpose whatsoever. Even if the container has been washed thoroughly, the risk of contamination is too high.

Rinse the empty container by filling it to about a quarter with clean water, closing it, and shaking it well. Pour the rinse water into the spray tank or down the drain. Repeat this process at least three times. Puncture the container after rinsing it, so that it cannot be reused.

To dispose of used items, burn waste bags, paper and mildly contaminated items. Severely contaminated items and redundant chemicals must be disposed of using a high-temperature incinerator, which can also be used for empty containers. Containers of highly flammable chemicals must however not be burned, even if they have been rinsed. A professional waste disposal company must take care of these containers.

7. Recordkeeping

Recordkeeping forms an important part of the well-run agrochemical store. A system must be in place from which we must always be able to tell what agrochemicals are in storeroom, and how much there is of each one. The system must also be used to make sure that we use the oldest agrochemicals in the store first.

There are various ways to keep stock records in an agrochemical store, but whatever system you choose to use, it is important that it must make it possible for you to record the details of new agrochemicals when they are received, record the details when an agrochemical is taken from the store to be used, and record when any agrochemical are disposed of for whatever reason.

Incident reporting is another important part of recordkeeping. An "incident" refers to an accident or a near accident at the workplace where workers were or could have been injured or killed, safety was compromised, or property was damaged.

summary

Chapter 2 – Agrochemical Storage

- The rules for the storing agrochemicals safely are prescribed by Good Agricultural Practices regulations and by certification organisations.
- Agrochemicals must be stored in a secure, well-ventilated, cool, dry building that cannot be accessed by children, animals or unauthorised personnel.
- In the storage area, there must be easy access to washing facilities with running water, soap and towels.
- The storeroom must have a smooth, level cement floor, and warning signs must be placed on the outside of the storeroom that clearly show that it is an agrochemical storeroom.
- The storeroom must have at least two 9kg dry-powder fire extinguishers on hand, placed outside the storeroom.
- No food products, animal feed or seeds may be taken into the storeroom, and no eating, drinking or smoking should be allowed inside the storeroom.
- Different types of agrochemicals must be separated in the storeroom, ideally into their own area.
- Products should be used on a first-in-first-out basis to ensure that agrochemicals are used before reaching their expiry date.
- All agrochemicals are approved and registered with DoA.
- The agrochemical label should include instructions, a physical description, the chemical composition, the toxicity, the pre-harvest interval, and the expiry date.
- Agrochemicals are classified in terms of their toxicity in five groups, from group one for the most dangerous agrochemicals, to group five for agrochemicals that are unlikely to cause harm to humans if used in the normal way.
- The agrochemical store, the area around it and the protective gear and clothing that is used when agrochemicals are handled or applied must be kept clean and sanitised to limit the chance of contamination.
- Empty chemical containers must under no circumstances be reused for any purpose whatsoever.

assessment activities

- ✓ **Activity P2:** Complete this activity to test your knowledge of agrochemical storage.
- ✓ **Activity F1:** Complete this activity to test your knowledge of the entire module.