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Types of Pesticide Ingredients

Pesticide active ingredients are described by the types of pests they control or how they work. People often use the term "pesticide" to refer only to insecticides, but it actually applies to all the substances used to control pests.

Well known pesticides (terms defined below) include:

- insecticides,
- herbicides,
- rodenticides, and
- fungicides.

Less well-known pesticides (terms defined below) include:

- disinfectants,
- attractants,
- plant defoliants,
- swimming pool treatments, and
- plant growth regulators.

The following list will help you understand the wide range of types of pesticides:

- **Algicides** kill algae in lakes, canals, swimming pools, water tanks and other sites.
- **Antifoulants** kill or repel organisms that attach to underwater surfaces, such as barnacles that cling to boat bottoms.
- **Antimicrobials** kill microorganisms such as bacteria and viruses.
- **Attractants** lure pests to a trap or bait, for example, attract an insect or rodent into a trap.
- **Biopesticides** are derived from natural materials such as animals, plants, bacteria and certain minerals.
- **Biocides** kill microorganisms.
- **Defoliants** cause leaves or foliage to drop from a plant, usually to facilitate harvest.
- **Desiccants** promote drying of living tissues, such as unwanted plant tops.
- **Disinfectants and sanitizers** kill or inactivate disease-producing microorganisms on inanimate objects.
- **Fungicides** kill fungi (including blights, mildews, molds and rusts).
- **Fumigants** produce gas or vapor intended to destroy pests, for example in buildings or soil.
- **Herbicides** kill weeds and other plants that grow where they are not wanted.
- **Insect growth regulators** disrupt the molting, maturing from pupal stage to adult, or other life processes of insects.
- **Insecticides** kill insects and other arthropods.
- **Miticides** (also called acaricides) kill mites that feed on plants and animals.
- **Microbial pesticides** are microorganisms that kill, inhibit, or out-compete pests, including insects or other microorganism pests.
- **Molluscicides** kill snails and slugs.
- **Nematicides** kill nematodes (microscopic, worm-like organisms that feed on plant roots).
- **Ovicides** kill eggs of insects and mites.
- **Pheromones** disrupt the mating behavior of insects.
- **Plant growth regulators** alter the expected growth, flowering or reproduction rate of plants (does not include fertilizers).

- **Plant Incorporated Protectants** are substances that plants produce from genetic material that has been added to the plant.
- **Repellents** repel pests, including insects (such as mosquitoes) and birds.
- **Rodenticides** control mice and other rodents.

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