

■ **PUBLIC HEALTH LAWS (*HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES DISCLOSURE BY EMPLOYERS*)**

TERMS:

Safety Data — Every farm operator or other employer who uses or stores toxic or hazardous substances at the workplace must make certain printed information about each of those substances available to the workers at a central location at the place of employment. This information, known as a "material safety data sheet," must include the name of the substance, the risks associated with its use, the precautions to be followed and necessary protective equipment to be used, appropriate emergency procedures, and related facts

Right to Information — A farmworker (or the worker's designated representative) may request, and has a right to receive from the employer, a material safety data sheet for each toxic or hazardous substance to which the worker is, has been, or may be exposed on the job. The employer generally must provide data sheets within 4 working days of a request. Also, the employer must post a notice in a central location, informing workers of their rights under these provisions.

Training — Within the first month of employment and at least once a year after that, employers must instruct their workers regarding the nature and effects of the hazardous substances present in the workplace. Instruction may be provided in written form or through training programs, but in either case must be presented in non-technical language. Employers are required to cover such topics as the identity of each toxic substance involved, its location at the workplace, appropriate first-aid treatment in the event of overexposure, proper handling practices, the health effects of the substance, and the rights and duties of workers under this law.

ENFORCEMENT: *Massachusetts Department of Labor Standards, Boston, Massachusetts 02114 (617-626-6975).*

SPECIAL NOTE: A person may not fire, punish or discriminate against a worker because the worker has filed a complaint or made use of any other right granted by these provisions.