

# CULTIVATING COLLABORATIONS: HEALTH AND SAFETY IN WESTERN AGRICULTURE

## SPEAKER BIOGRAPHY

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### ***RICHARD FENSKE, PHD MPH***

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Richard A. Fenske is Professor of Environmental Health at the University of Washington and director of the Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center since its establishment in 1996. He also serves as Deputy Director of the EPA/NIEHS-supported UW Center for Child Environmental Health Risks Research, and is a core faculty member of the NIEHS-supported Center for Ecogenetics and Environmental Health.

Dr. Fenske has developed an international reputation in occupational skin exposure and agricultural hygiene. He developed the video imaging technique for assessing exposure (VITAE system), a method that allows visualization and quantification of dermal exposure to hazardous chemicals. The VITAE system has been adopted by occupational health research laboratories in the United Kingdom, The Netherlands and Canada, as well as at the NIOSH sponsored Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health, University of Iowa. He continues to maintain an active program of research and publication in this field. His work over the last several years has focused on children's exposure to pesticides in agricultural communities.

Dr. Fenske serves on the Advisory Committee of the National Cancer Institute's Agricultural Health Study, a prospective epidemiological study of pesticide applicators and their families that involves researchers from U.S. EPA and NIEHS. He also serves as a member of the U.S. EPA's Scientific Advisory Panel. He served as a member of the Agriculture Committee of the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists from 1993-2000. Dr. Fenske has provided testimony to the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Toxic Substances, Environmental Oversight, Research and Development regarding children's exposure to pesticides. He was an invited speaker at the Surgeon General's Conference on Agricultural Safety and Health in 1991, and also served as an Outside Reviewer for the initial NIOSH sponsored Farm Family Health Hazard Surveillance proposals. He served on the NIOSH National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) Allergic and Irritant Dermatitis team from 1997-2002.

From 1984-1990 Dr. Fenske was Assistant Professor and then Associate Professor of Environmental Sciences at Rutgers University. Prior to this position, he received his doctoral degree and master's in public health from UC Berkeley in Environmental Health Sciences. He was also awarded a master's degree in geography from UC Berkeley and a master's degree in comparative religion from Columbia University in New York. His bachelor's degree was in history from Stanford University.