the physical supports, such as metal or wooden poles, presents added costs and difficulties for the industry. Third, the physical supports needed for the 14" X 16" inch signs can prevent operation of the standard machinery and equipment used in these operations and can obstruct overhead irrigation spray equipment, including the irrigation water itself.

The industry believes that the use of smaller signs in greenhouses and nurseries will facilitate posting and worker awareness of areas under the restricted entry interval (REI). In the AAN's view, allowing the use of smaller signs will eliminate the ambiguity and resulting inconsistencies in interpretation between growers and states as to when small signs can be used. The AAN also believes that smaller signs can be equally visible and legible in the small-scale of greenhouses and nurseries, as compared to larger signs on farms and forests.

Some state agencies have requested EPA's review of posting plans to determine whether they are consistent with current rule requirements. For example, the Oregon Association of Nurserymen (OAN) organized a task force with Oregon OSHA and EPA Region 10 to develop a system of posting beds and fields in greenhouses and nurseries. The Oregon plan contained the following conditions: For greenhouse and nursery beds, 5'' X 5'' signs would be placed at the beds' corners and every 25 feet along the beds bordering walkways that serve as usual worker entry points. For nursery fields, each field would be posted with a 7" X 8" sign at its corners and every 50 feet along usual worker access routes bordering the field, such as walkways and access roads.

C. Proposal to Allow Smaller Signs in Greenhouses and Nurseries

The Agency believes that use of the 14" X 16" signs may interfere with operations or the clear identification of treated areas in greenhouses and nurseries, particularly in cases where there may be different treatment regimes in close proximity that require separate posting. EPA does not envision that using the standard-size signs would interfere with operations or the identification of treated areas on sod farms, tree nurseries, and nurseries where large fields of nursery stock receive uniform pesticide treatments.

EPA also believes that a minimumsize for smaller signs should be set because such a limitation may be necessary to meet the rule requirement that signs be both visible and legible from usual points of entry to the treated area. EPA considered proposing that signs be posted at specific distances, such as the Oregon plan discussed in Unit IV.B. of this preamble. However, although spacing signs at specific distances could be useful in clearly identifying the treated areas, the Agency is not proposing this requirement. The Agency is concerned that a single specific distance between signs may not be appropriate for all nursery and greenhouse situations.

EPA is proposing the following for consideration and comment:

In addition to allowing the use of smaller signs when the treated area is too small to accommodate the 14" X 16" sign, EPA proposes to allow smaller signs in greenhouses and nurseries when use of a larger sign may interfere with operations or the clear identification of treated areas. This additional option would not preclude the continued use of a small sign based on spatial limitations, as presently allowed. Also, a minimum size would be set for smaller signs. This minimum size requirement would apply to all uses of small signs, including uses already allowed by the WPS. Further, signs would have to meet all other posting requirements of the rule, including that they be visible and legible during the time they are posted.

The proposed text that would incorporate a performance standard that considers interference with operations or the clear identification of treated areas and a minimum sign size for greenhouses and nurseries is located in the regulatory text of this document.

D. Solicitation of Comments

EPA is interested in receiving comments and information on the proposed option. Specifically, comments are requested on: