PEP-Talk, February, 2003

Pesticide Education Program Ohio State University Extension Joanne Kick-Raack, State Coordinator Cindy Folck, Communications Vol. 7, Issue 2

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Growers Request Recondiseration of Diazinon

The president of the National Corn Growers Association sent a letter to EPA requesting reconsideration of a proposal to cancel use of diazinon as a corn seed treatment. All residential uses of diazinon will be phased out by 2004, with additional mitigation of agriculture uses proposed. These include cancellation of almost all aerial and granular applications of diazinon including seed treatment.

The EPA concern is over use of diazinon in planter box treatments for seed corn. Diazinon is highly toxic to birds and ranks second in number of bird kills linked to a currently registered pesticide, even though a majority of the bird kills were related to lawn and turf uses. A Federal Register notice for a comment-period is expected since the one announced last fall was not properly released. *(Source: Pesticide & Toxic Chemical News, Vol. 31, No. 6)*

Inert Ingredients List Changes

EPA has updated the list of minimal-concern inert ingredients. These inerts are divided into List 4A, which are the minimal risk inert ingredients, and List 4B, which are inerts that have sufficient data to substantiate they can be used safety in pesticide products. Lists 1 through 3 consist of inerts with toxicological concern, potential

toxicity or high priority for testing and inerts of unknown toxicity. The updated listing for List 4, as well as the other listings, is available by clicking here.

The updates on the list will have an impact on the 25(b) exempted pesticide products. Some of these products will no longer be exempted if they include an inert ingredient that has been removed from List 4A. (*Source: Office of Pesticide Programs, EPA*)

European Commission Bans 320 Active Ingredients

The European Commission has banned 320 active ingredients after the products' manufacturers chose not to defend their continued use. The ingredients will be banned July 25, 2003. This is part of an ongoing re-evaluation of all active ingredients approved in Europe before July 26, 1993. The substances will be removed by default unless the manufacturer defends the product. Growers of minor crops have seen many of their products withdrawn because of small markets or slow sales. (*Source: Pesticide & Toxic Chemical News, Vol. 31, No. 8*)

The Mosquito Buzz

The lawsuit alleging that New York City violated the Clean Water Act (CWA) by not obtaining pollution discharge permits during mosquito spraying was thrown out by a federal judge. The judge stated he believed Congress didn't intend for CWA to conflict with FIFRA (Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act). However, state regulators see this an urgent issue for the next mosquito season. Several states have increased funding for training pesticide applicators for mosquito control. But, the threat of CWA lawsuits has many states worried about the success of control programs. Some states have expressed urgency to EPA to revise mosquito labels to address spraying over bodies of water so some of the lawsuits could be avoided. (*Source: Pesticide & Toxic Chemical News, Vol. 31, No. 8*)

In an unrelated story, EPA and the Justice Department have targeted a network of pesticide manufacturers and suppliers in the U.S. and overseas who allegedly sold counterfeit versions of pesticides that are widely used to fight mosquitoes that may carry the West Nile Virus. The counterfeiters have sold imitation versions of brand-name pesticides. They put a copy of the label on their own pesticide formulation. (*Source: Environmental Risk Analysis Program, Cornell University*)

Organic Debate

The organic versus conventional food production debate continues to gain momentum with the USDA's new organic standards that were implemented this fall. U.S. organic growers have increased advertising touting organically grown foods as safer, better,

more healthy and safer for the environment. In England, the British Advertising Standards Authority stopped their organic food industry from making claims that their products were safer or more nutritious. The standard authority says the organic industry has no evidence that justify the claims.

The FDA's annual testing show the U.S. foods carry less than one percent of synthetic pesticide residues allowed. The Consumers Union reported that 25 percent of organic fruits and vegetables have detectable residues of synthetic pesticides and one-third of these had residue levels higher than conventionally grown produce. The debate continues whether the organic foods are superior, safer and more healthy. The Center for Global Food Issues, a conservation think-tank, points out that our population is stronger, taller and longer-lived than any people in history. The Scottish Crop Research Institute has stated that the balance of environmental advantages and disadvantages in the organic system are not clear when compared to a conventional system.

Currently, organic food is attracting large companies in America. Five large farms supply one-half of the organic food produced in California. Seventy percent of America's organic milk is supplied by two large dairies owned by the same company.

In a unrelated story, a study recently published in Environmental Health Perspectives claimed that children who eat organic produce have significantly lower levels of organophosphorus pesticide metabolites than children with more conventional diets. The research was done by the University of Washington with 24-hour urine samples from 39 Seattle pre-school children, 18 of whom had a primarily organic diet and 21 of whom ate conventional foods. (*Source: Chemically Speaking, University of Florida Extension, Nov.-Dec. 2002*)

Children and Pesticides

The American Council on Science and Health, based in New York, has released a book called, "Are Children More Vulnerable to Environmental Chemicals?" The group argues that children's health protection has emerged as a disturbing pattern among activists with a non-scientific agenda. According to ACSH, the book reveals there is no scientific evidence to support the claim that children are more vulnerable to all environmental chemicals. Information about the book is available on their website. (Source: Chemically Speaking, University of Florida Extension, Nov. - Dec. 2002)

Beware of Winter Contracts

Recently, a pest control company settled with the Massachusetts attorney general for \$100,000. The company was spraying home exteriors during winter with a residual contact insecticide and encouraging consumers to purchase monthly service contracts for carpenter ant extermination although these insects are largely dormant in cold weather. The company has agreed to stop applying pesticides outdoors for carpenter ants during the winter months and explain to customers that year-round pesticide control for carpenter ants may not be necessary. *(Source: Massachusetts Attorney General's Office.)*

Hartz Must Create New Labeling

Hartz Mountain Corp. must recover, repackage and relabel two flea and tick products available for cats. The products received reports of skin irritation, hair loss, tremors and death among pets treated with the products. Phenothrin, a pyrethoid that kills adult fleas and ticks is the active ingredient in both of these products along with methoprene, an insect growth regulator that kills eggs.

Most of the problems resulted from pet owners not applying the product according to label directions. The product was misapplied to dogs and newborn kittens, and used in wrong dosage amounts on cats. The product will be repackaged and relabeled with easy-to-read directions to apply the pesticide to a single spot on the back of the neck at the base of the cat's head. (*Source: Pesticide & Toxic Chemical News, Vol. 31, No. 6*)

Pesticide Crop Watch

Insecticides

Commando (ethion) - Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica, Inc. has requested cancellation of this cattle ear tag.

Gnatrol DG (B.t.) - Valent has added to their label the control of mushroom fly larvae in mushroom compost.

Talstar (bifenthrin) - FMC has added to their label the usage on home perimeters, ornamental flowers, home vegetable gardens, ornamentals and lawns.

Herbicides

Prism (clethodim) - Valent has added to their label the usage on leafy brassica crops, mint and spinach.

Fungicides

Bio Save 10 LP (Pseudomonas syringale strain E SC-10) - EcoScience has deleted from their label usage on potatoes.

Elevate (fenhexamid) - Arvesta has added to their label the usage on pistachios, suppression of powdery mildew on grapes, the control of botrytis disease on caneberries and the foliar usage on bushberries.

Fenarimol - EPA has published for comments on the tolerance reassessment progress of fenarimol. This fungicide is used to treat apples, cherries, grapes, pears and pecans. It is also registered for use on ornamental plants, trees and residential and recreational turf. The food tolerances of fenarimol is within the FQPA safety factor but there are concerns about exposures to children by way of lawns or drinking water. For more information is available.

Fosphite (potassium phosphate) - JH Biotech has a new fungicide to control downy mildew, phytophthora and pythium on ornamental plants, bedding plants, forests and Christmas trees.

Lexx-a-Phos (**dipotassium phosphate**) - EPA has approved an application by Foliar Nutrient, Inc. to register this new active ingredient to control certain fungal diseases on woody ornamentals, turfgrass and non-bearing fruit and nut trees.

Serenade (Bacillus subtilis QST 713) - Agraquest has added to their label the usage on broccoli and peppers.

Terra-Cyte (sodium carbonate perohydrate) - EPA has approved an application by Bio Safe Systems to register this new active ingredient as an algaecide and fungicide for use in ornamental plants and turf.

Miscellaneous

BASF - The company will eliminate approximately 300 R&D jobs in its crop protection business. It will get rid of its research facilities in Greenville, Miss.; Princeton, N.J.; and Ebina, Japan by the end of the year.

Diethyl phthalate (DEP), a chemical commonly used in fragrances, causes sperm damage at current levels of exposure according to a study conducted by Harvard University. The sperm damage can cause infertility, miscarriages and birth defects. Exposure to phthalates, which are found in a majority of beauty products, has been linked to DNA damage in other cell types. **Pentachlorophenol (Penta)** - A U.S. district court judge will hear a case this month to suspend all uses of the wood preservative pentachlorophenol (penta). Penta is used to treat more than half of the utility poles in the U.S. The plaintiffs include several environmental groups and a family in Florida who claims to be a victim of penta applications. This is seen as the first part of a larger case seeking cancellation of penta, chromated copper arsenate (CCA) and creosote.

(Sources for Pesticide Crop Watch: Agriculture Chemical News, Vol. 280; Chemically Speaking, University of Florida Extension, Nov. - Dec. 2002; Pesticide & Toxic Chemical News, Vol. 31, No. 8 and No. 7; EPA Pesticide Program Update)

Upcoming Events

Commercial New Applicator Training

OSU Fawcett Center, Columbus March 4, 2003 (core, turf, general pest) March 5, 2003 (core, industrial vegetation, agronomics, ornamentals)

Wood-Destroying Insect Inspection Training

February 27, 2003 - Ohio Department of Agriculture, Reynoldsburg

Commercial Recertification Conference

General Conference (turf, ornamental, industrial vegetation, general pest, termite) February 6, 2003 - Columbus Convention Center

Commercial Recertification Conference

Field Crop Conference (agricultural pest, agronomic weed) February 12, 2003 - Lima Holiday Inn

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