

## PEP-Talk, January, 2002

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### In This Issue:

- ["Caution" May Be Removed from Some Labels](#)
- [EPA Considers Ethics of Human Subjects](#)
- [Sales of Unregistered Anthrax Pesticide Products Stopped](#)
- [Groups Petition EPA to Ban Wood Preservatives](#)
- [Pending Chemical Legislation a Result of Terrorism](#)
- [Organophosphate Cumulative Risk Assessment Set for Release](#)
- [Scientist Falsified Research](#)
- [Hispanic Farm Workers Face Cancer Risk, Report Says](#)
- [Pesticide Crop Watch](#)
- [Upcoming Events](#)

### "Caution" May Be Removed from Some Labels

*Labels Targeted Are the Least Toxic Products*

After surveying consumers, EPA has determined registrants of pesticides in the toxicity IV category will be allowed to remove the signal word "caution" from the products' labels. EPA says the survey indicated consumers have difficulty understanding the "toxicity hierarchy" based on words such as "caution" and the even stronger "danger."

Caution has been used for both Category III (slightly toxic) and Category IV (practically nontoxic) products. Because the agency could not come up with a milder signal word than "caution" for the nontoxic category, it opted to remove the signal word altogether.

The rule is expected to go into effect 60 days after publication. Qualified registrants would still have to file an application with EPA requesting permission to amend the label by removing the word. EPA says with this system they will be able to keep track of the registrants that delete the word and those that retain it. (*Source: Pesticide & Toxic Chemical News, December 14, 2001.*)

### EPA Considers Ethics of Human Studies

EPA has requested that the National Academy of Sciences conduct a review of the complex scientific and ethical issues involved with allowing studies which intentionally dose human subjects with toxicants.

Traditionally, only animal subjects have been used in studies submitted to EPA for registration of pesticides. Currently, EPA operates under the "Protection of Human Subjects Rule" (known as the "Common Rule," which details the protection of human subjects of EPA-conducted or supported research). Once developed, the review will be open for public comment and participation. *(Source: EPA Office Of Pesticide Programs Update.)*

### **Sales of Unregistered Anthrax Pesticide Products Stopped**

EPA has ordered two companies to immediately stop selling unregistered pesticides claiming to protect the public from anthrax and requested the companies voluntarily recall these illegal products from the marketplace.

The EPA orders were issued to Homeland Security Plus of Gilbert, Ariz., for the illegal sale of Biohazard Decontamination Solution, and to Testing Kits, Inc., of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., for the illegal sale of EnviroFoam Easy DECON. Both unregistered products were marketing on the Internet. The companies have since removed the promotion from their websites.

EPA has authorized the limited use of an anthrax decontamination foam (a formulation of quaternary ammonium and hydrogen peroxide) for use in emergency cleanup operations of the U.S. Congress, federal agencies and the U.S. Postal Service under a FIFRA exemption. The anthrax decontamination foam for which the EPA exemption was granted was not manufactured by Testing Kits, Inc. Selling or distributing unregistered pesticides is generally prohibited under FIFRA. EPA has an extensive pre-market registration process to ensure that products that claim to protect public health are effective. *(Source: EPA Office of Pesticide Programs Update, December 21, 2001.)*

### **Groups Petition EPA to Ban Wood Preservatives**

Environmental and public health groups petitioned EPA to immediately stop the continued use of chromated copper arsenate (CCA) and pentachlorophenol (penta). The groups say that EPA has sufficient data on wood preservatives' health and environmental risks to initiate cancellation and suspension proceedings, rather than conduct further views. These groups claim that economically viable alternatives exist for the industry.

There are a number of principal users of chemically treated wood products, including utility companies (treated wood poles), construction companies (treated lumber) and the railroad owners (treated railroad ties). Wood treated with CCA is widely available through retail markets including home improvement superstores. (*Source: EPA Office of Pesticide Programs Update, January 2, 2002.*)

### **Pending Chemical Legislation a Result of Terrorism**

A significant federal toxics-related legislation will require the government to identify the most vulnerable domestic chemicals and oblige relevant parties to keep records on the potential for their accidental or criminal release. This legislation is in response to the terrorism attacks on September 11. The bill would give EPA one year to identify "priority categories" of chemicals and chemical sources based on the proximity to population centers, their threat to security and infrastructure, and the quantities needed to cause serious harm.

State agencies would be given the second year to formulate regulations requiring the owners and operators of prioritized chemical sources to take "adequate actions" to minimize any threats that are identified. These actions could be changes in physical plant and/or procedural changes and will include mandatory record keeping. (*Source: Chemically Speaking, University of Florida, November - December, 2001.*)

### **Organophosphate Cumulative Risk Assessment Released**

EPA released the preliminary cumulative risk assessment (CRA) for organophosphates on December 3, which was considered the most significant and complex risk assessment the Office of Pesticide Programs has ever performed. The preliminary CRA totals more than 3,000 pages.

The assessment represents a **new** way of analyzing data about potential exposure to pesticides. EPA's methods result in measurement of the probability of exposure to more than one organophosphorus pesticide and assessment of each such combined exposure. This assessment is especially important as it will serve as a prototype for future assessments. EPA, under FQPA, will accept public comments until March 8, 2002. The preliminary risk assessment is available at [www.epa.gov/pesticides/cumulative](http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/cumulative). The final assessment is planned to be released August 3, 2002. (*Source: EPA Office of Pesticide Programs Update, January 2, 2002.*)

### **Scientist Falsified Research**

A former researcher at the Tulane University Center for Bioenvironmental Research has been found to have falsified research that appeared in the journal "Science." Steven Arnold produced research that implied that certain insecticides and hydroxylated polychlorinated biphenyls, which have weak estrogenic activity when tested alone, were up to 1,000 times more potent in mimicking estrogen when tested in combination. These results were important to public health because they suggested that the EPA may need to adjust its guidelines on exposure limits to such chemicals.

The study received a great deal of attention, especially since it was released shortly after the publication of *Our Stolen Future*. It also served as a catalyst for the Food Quality Protection Act, passed in 1996 which requires EPA to develop a program for screening thousands of chemicals for their ability to act as endocrine disruptors. The program now costs about \$10 million per year, but the cost to industry and consumers is likely to stretch into the billions.

In 1999, an expert committee of the National Academy of Sciences National Research Council reported there was no evidence that chemicals in the environment were disrupting hormonal processes in humans and wildlife. Surprisingly, neither this report or the proven fraud of the researcher have ended the endocrine disruptor scare. (*Source: Chemically Speaking, University of Florida Extension, November - December, 2001.*)

### **Hispanic Farm Workers Face Cancer Risk Report Says**

Hispanic farm workers are more likely to develop some types of cancer than Hispanics who work in other professions, according to a report published recently in the *American Journal of Industrial Medicine*. The report blames occupational exposures to pesticides and fertilizers, combined with poor cancer screening.

The report was based on medical records from the United Farmworkers of America and showed that Hispanic farm workers were 59% more likely to develop leukemia and 70% more likely to develop stomach cancer. The commissioner of the San Diego County agriculture department said a fear of deportation and general mistrust of the American health care system is leading Mexican immigrants working in agriculture to forego medical attention when they experience symptoms suggesting pesticide poisoning or other industry-related risks. (*Source: Pesticide & Toxic Chemical News, December 3, 2001.*)

### **Pesticide Crop Watch**

#### **Insecticides**

Acephate -- EPA announced receipt of requests by certain registrants of the organophosphorus pesticide to cancel certain uses and voluntarily cancel certain products containing acephate. Acephate is registered to control certain insect pests on a variety of field, fruit and vegetable crops, in food handling establishments, on ornamental plants both in greenhouses and outdoors, and on turf grass sites, including residential lawns, golf courses, sod farms and industrial sites. Acephate is also registered for use in and around the home to control common household insect pests.

Botanigard ES, (*Beauveria bassiana* strain GHA) Mycotech Corp. label changes include the signal word changed to caution, the re-entry interval to four hours and to remove chemigation and add aerial application.

Guthion (azinophos-methyl) Manufactured by Bayer, EPA has cancelled the usages on 28 crops and installed a 4-year phase out period on almonds, tart cherries, cranberries, peaches, pistachios and walnuts. EPA will allow a 4-year time limited usage on the following crops in which the usage will be re-assessed prior to the end of the four years: apples, crabapples, blueberries, sweet cherries, pears, pine seed orchards, Brussels sprouts, caneberries and in nurseries.

Imidan (phosmet) Gowan added to their label the usage on ornamental plants, non-bearing fruit and nut trees, vines and a claim to control snails. In an agreement with EPA, the company will cancel the uses on household ornamentals, trees and pets. EPA has authorized the use of this product for the next five years on the following crops: apples, apricots, blueberries, crabapples, grapes, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums and dried plums.

Rimon (novaluron) Makhteshim-Agan has received EPA registration for usage on greenhouse ornamentals. It will be sold in this market by Uniroyal. Registration on pome fruit and vegetables is expected by 2003.

Sevin (carbaryl) Due to the high cost of re-registration, Aventis has deleted the usage on poultry from the label.

## **Fungicides**

Auxigro (GAA/glutamic acid) Emerald BioAg has added to their label the control of brown rot and the suppression of shot hole on stone fruits and almonds.

Quadris (azoxystrobin) Syngenta has added to their label the usage on strawberries to control powdery mildew, root rot and basal stem rot.

Terrazole (etridiazole) Uniroyal has added to their label the usage in tobacco transplant float beds to control pythium root rot.

Topsin-M (thiophanate-methyl) Cerexagri has added to their label the usage on pistachios, pears, grapes, celery and garlic to control various diseases.

## **Upcoming Events**

### **Recertification Schools**

**Perrysburg** - Holiday Inn French Quarters

Urban & Public Operators - January 16, 2002

Agriculture - January 17, 2002

**Columbus** - Columbus Convention Center

Urban & Public Operators - January 30, 2002

Agriculture - January 31, 2002

### **Commercial New Applicator School**

March 13 - 14, 2002 at the Fawcett Center, OSU Campus

March 13 - Special video conference link at the Southwest District Office, Vandalia