
California DPR Partners with EPA

A final rule was signed on December 7th establishing a tolerance for residues of avermectin on celeriac roots and tops at 0.05 ppm. The Interregional Research Project Number 4 (IR-4) requested this tolerance, which is the first of several IR-4 petitions that are planned for completion in FY 2001 under a work share program with the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (Cal-DPR). Cal-DPR reviewed

the magnitude of residue data submitted by IR-4 and the Office of Pesticide Programs (OPP) completed the FQPA risk assessment. This work share program will conserve Health Effects Division (HED) resources and will facilitate registration of IR-4 supported uses in California. (Hoyt Jamerson; 703-208-9368).

Article by Hoyt Jamerson

New Companies

The agricultural chemical industry continues to experience its share of mergers, spin-offs, and other kinds of consolidations as year 2001 begins. The recent (1999) merger of Rhone-Poulenc and AgrEvo to form Aventis CropScience could take on a different look in 2001. A November 16, 2000, announcement indicated that the French drug maker Aventis SA plans to shed its crop protection division, although Germany's Schering AG, which holds a 24% interest, may prove to be an obstacle to this spin-off plan. Aventis expects the divestment to be accomplished by the end of 2001, and the new company would operate under the name Agreva. Aventis investors welcomed the prospect of the company's exit from agrochemicals and the StarLink corn controversy, leaving Aventis a pure pharmaceuticals company.

On November 13, 2000, the new company Syngenta AG was officially born, formed by the joint spin-offs of the agribusiness of Novartis AG and the agrochemicals business of AstraZeneca. As part of the regulatory approvals for the formation of Syngenta, Novartis sold its global interest in the fungicide Flint (trifloxystrobin) to Bayer, and AstraZeneca sold its acetochlor herbicide products to Dow AgroSciences. Syngenta also announced in late November the sale of two more product lines (to Makhteshim Agan Industries Ltd.) to satisfy merger conditions imposed by the European Commission: propaquizafop selective herbicide in broadleaf crops and tau-fluvalinate insecticide used mainly in cereals and orchards - the major market for both products is in Western Europe. Syngenta global headquarters will be in Basel, Switzerland, and in the U.S. will operate from

Greensboro, NC, with a small business contingent in Wilmington, DE.

Another consolidation finalized since the summer issue of this newsletter went to press is the purchase by BASF of the Cyanamid Division of American Home Products - Cyanamid officially became part of BASF on July 1, 2000. The acquisition nearly doubles BASF's global crop protection sales, strengthens its position in the U.S. especially in herbicides and insecticides, and fills the research pipeline. Fifteen new active ingredients are expected to be launched by 2006, including 4 new herbicides and 4 new fungicides. An unexpected result of this acquisition has been the relocation of BASF's global crop protection headquarters from Germany to Mount Olive, NJ, site of the company's U.S. corporate headquarters. The North American business unit is based in Raleigh, NC.

As of January 1, 2001, Elf Atochem Agrichemicals Division will become Cerexagri, Inc., an independent, wholly-owned subsidiary of ATOFINA Chemicals. The division's current management team will operate Cerexagri, Inc., which will focus solely on the agricultural market.

Stay tuned for new developments as our list of official company contacts continues to grow shorter! It is possible that further consolidations in this industry will take place in the coming years. Although the company list is shrinking, IR-4 expects to have a continuous supply of potential tools to help develop for the management of pests on minor crops!

Article by Van Starner