
EPA/IR-4 Technical Working Group Meeting

The EPA/IR-4 Technical Working Group (TWG) has convened for a series of meetings between the IR-4 Headquarters and key scientists from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), intended to produce a more efficient system of IR-4 data submission and EPA review. These meetings have been held at approximately quarterly intervals, generally at the offices of one or the other organization. A TWG meeting was held on March 19, 2002, in Arlington, Virginia. Participants included representatives of EPA, IR-4, USDA, California Dept. of Pesticide Regulations (CDPR), and Canadian cooperators, including the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) and the Canadian Horticultural Council (CHC).

To more efficiently handle Notices of Filing (NOF's) prepared by pesticide registrants to accompany IR-4 petitions, Dan Kunkel announced that he has set up an electronic file on the IR-4 shared directory where NOF's shall be saved and then copied to EPA. Hoyt Jamerson requested that IR-4 encourage registrants to submit their label package as soon as IR-4 has submitted the petition.

The pyriproxyfen expedited tolerance requests continue to move along. Ken Samoil reported that petitions had been submitted earlier in March for figs (referencing stone fruit data) and various tropical crops (referencing guava, lychee, and sugar apple data). Ken was asked to submit a Reduced Risk request letter for these uses, which he did the day after this meeting. Keith Dorschner and Bernie Schneider discussed the reduced data set proposal for bifentazate; some low dietary intake (LDI) crops may be added to the existing proposal.

Fred Salzman, Tom Bloem, and Jeff Herndon brought the group up-to-date on the status of the expedited registration for uses of carfentrazone. A conference call had been held earlier in the month with CDPR to discuss the issue of drift from aerial applications of this herbicide to rice.

Bernie Schneider provided a handout entitled "How to Express Tolerances for Crop Groupings/Subgroups". The use of this handout by IR-4 should reduce the number of Section F revisions that have been necessary for petitions because of imprecise wording.

George Markle gave an update on the Crop Grouping Symposium scheduled for October 7-8, 2002. Workgroup chairpersons volunteered for this symposium from among the IR-4 personnel.

After lunch, Hoyt discussed the status of petition reviews at EPA. He noted that certain delays that they were experiencing were common in the second quarter (January-March) of the fiscal year and that in previous years the pace had picked up in the last two quarters. Roberta Firoved reported that CDPR's reviews were progressing on schedule. Hoyt praised the cooperation between CDPR and EPA that had resulted in increased efficiency of petition reviews. Dan talked about the current state of the draft fiscal year 2003

EPA Workplan for IR-4 projected submissions. Doug Rothwell of PMRA (Canada) discussed Canada's interest in cooperating with certain IR-4 studies in the coming year.

Jerry Baron reported that the Food Use Workshop has been scheduled for September 17-19 in Orlando, Florida.

Keith reported on the interest in ant bait station registrations in California and Texas, and on how he had facilitated this registration in Hawaii as a non-food use. Roberta requested that information on this proposed use needs to be sent to CDPR as well as to EPA.

Bob Holm discussed biopesticide issues, including the sabbatical the IR-4 Biopesticide Coordinator, Michael Braverman, will be taking at EPA. Pat Cimino reported on EPA's registration work on older products such as TBZ and methamidophos. She is determining which pesticide/plant combination data on foliar dislodgeable residues on ornamental plants would be useful. IR-4 plans to conduct a limited number of such studies through its ARS program. Paul Schwartz requested guidance from EPA on the details of these trials, which differ from the magnitude of residue trials normally conducted by IR-4 to support proposed food uses.

The next TWG meeting was held on Tuesday, June 11, 2002. Topics of discussion included pyriproxyfen and buprofezin data reduction proposals, the use of European data to support outdoor ornamental uses and a greenhouse tomato use, the upcoming IR-4 Crop Grouping Symposium, and updates on the EPA Workplan, Canadian IR-4 research program, the NAFTA Technical Working Group, and biopesticides. A more extensive summary will be included in the next issue of the IR-4 Newsletter.

On Wednesday, June 12, representatives of IR-4, EPA, and USDA participated in the "Beyond the Chesapeake" agricultural field training program. A bus left Arlington, Virginia, at 8 a.m. and drove to Laurel, Delaware, where the group listened to Rob Collins of Ag-Air talk about aerial pesticide applications. Following his discussion of procedures, safety precautions, and the business aspects of his work, Rob impressed the group with a demonstration of an aerial application (of water) onto a corn field adjacent to the airport. The group then traveled to the University of Maryland Lower Eastern Shore Research & Extension Center in Salisbury, where Marylee Ross, the Maryland IR-4 Field Research Director provided lunch (featuring crab soup) and led a tour of the field and screen house facilities. The next stop on the tour was the Wye Research & Education Center, where Dr. Mike Embrey discussed his honeybee research and touched on the impact of Varroa and Tracheal mites. Finally, the group convened to continue the discussions at the Harris Crab House in Grasonville, Maryland, for a dinner of hard-shell crabs, steamed shrimp, barbecued chicken and ribs, corn on the cob, and pie for dessert. The weather during the day was good and the program was deemed very successful.

Article by Ken Samoil