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BOARD OF PESTICIDES CONTROL

March 12, 2012

University of Maine Cooperative Extension Pest Management Office, 491 College Avenue, Orono, Maine

MINUTES

9:00 AM

Present: Jemison, Flewelling; via speaker phone: Eckert, Granger and Stevenson

1. Introductions of Board and Staff

Board members, staff and Assistant Attorney General Randlett introduced themselves.

2. FIFRA Section 18 Emergency Exemption Request for the Use of Revus[®] as a Potato Seed Piece Treatment

Extreme wet weather and the importation of infected seed potatoes during the 2011 growing season combined to result in a severe outbreak of late blight, *Phytophthora infestans*, on the 2011 Maine potato crop. Saturated soil conditions late in the season facilitated transfer of spores to the tubers. Early testing has confirmed that much of the seed potato supply for 2012 is infected, threatening the 2012 crop year before it's planted. The only recourse for seed borne late blight, which begins very early in the growing season, is crop destruction. Only a highly effective seed treatment can help prevent a catastrophic growing season for 2012. Consequently, the Board's staff has worked with the University of Maine Cooperative Extension and the product manufacturer, Syngenta Crop Protection, LLC, to develop a FIFRA Section 18 Emergency Exemption request for the use of Revus[®] Fungicide on potato seed pieces. The Board will now consider the request and determine whether to approve it.

Presentation By: Mary Tomlinson
Pesticides Registrar

Action Needed: Approve/Disapprove FIFRA Section 18 Emergency Request

Mary Tomlinson explained that the staff received a request from Steven Johnson of the University of Maine Cooperative Extension for a FIFRA Section 18 exemption for the use of Revus[®] fungicide on potato seed pieces. Johnson then described the late blight issues that the industry experienced during 2011 arising from seed imported from other states and Canada. The blight issue was exacerbated by the extreme rainfall, which also facilitated transport of spores through the soil to the tubers. This raised concerns that the 2012 seed supply could be infected with late

blight. Preliminary research has shown that Revus[®] is nearly 100% effective in controlling seed-borne late blight, while alternative fungicides lag far behind. In addition, recent evidence demonstrates that dry fungicide seed treatments can lead to seed piece breakdown, so an effective liquid seed piece treatment would have multiple advantages for growers. Johnson mentioned that Montana had a similar Section 18 exemption two years ago.

Eckert asked whether other states plan to apply for a Section 18 exemption. Johnson again mentioned the historical Montana application and indicated that three or four other states were waiting to piggyback on Maine's application.

Jemison asked whether Revus[®] was systemic, translaminar or protectant in its action. Johnson replied that Revus[®] is a translaminar, meaning the product can move locally within the plant tissue. He commented that Revus[®] has been shown to be very effective at preventing movement of the late blight pathogen from seed piece to the growing plant.

Eckert asked whether there were concerns about the proposed increase in the tolerance level. Lebel Hicks explained that treating the seed piece places the product in the vicinity of the developing tuber, where contact is more likely to take place. Computer models are predicting a higher likelihood that the seed piece treatment will result in residues being present on the tubers. Hicks went on to explain that the mammalian toxicity profile for mandipropamid, the active ingredient in Revus[®], is favorable, so that EPA probably will still find that the dietary risks are well within the acceptable range.

Jemison surmised that most of the residues will likely be in the potato skin or attached to soil particles adhering to the skin, which would mean dietary exposure would be less than the higher tolerance level suggests.

Eckert wondered how the product was applied and what the worker risks were. Flewelling explained that the liquid seed treatment methodology results in far less worker exposure than the dry treatments. Hicks added that mandipropamid has a much better toxicology profile, therefore the overall worker risks are significantly reduced.

Eckert/Flewelling: Moved and seconded approval of the Section 18 application of Revus[®] as a potato seed treatment

In Favor: Unanimous

3. Adjourn

Jemison/Flewelling: Moved and seconded that the meeting adjourn at 9:40 AM

In Favor: Unanimous