

AGROW

WORLD CROP PROTECTION NEWS

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EFSA safety clearance for MON87708 soybeans

The proposed import and use of Monsanto's genetically modified dicamba herbicide-tolerant MON87708 soybeans raises no health or environmental concerns, says the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). The company has applied for EU approval for import, processing and use in food and feed. The EFSA's opinion will go forward for consideration by the European Commission.

In a separate opinion on a review of the residue definition for dicamba, the EFSA concludes that the proposed use of the herbicide on the GM crop is unlikely to pose a consumer health risk. Monsanto applied for the review in order to accommodate dicamba use on GM soybeans grown in the US, and the subsequent import of soybean meal into the EU. The relevant component in residues is the metabolite, 3,6-dichlorosalicylic acid (DCSA), as dicamba is not detected at harvest. The EFSA proposes to set a specific import tolerance of 0.4 mg/kg for DCSA in soybeans and not to change the current EU maximum residue limit of 0.05 mg/kg set for dicamba in conventional plants.

The US introduction of Monsanto's dicamba-tolerant MON87708 soybeans has been delayed by the USDA's decision to require an environmental impact statement (Agrow No 664, p 14).

EU funds insecticide synergist research

The European Commission has awarded a consortium of companies and research organisations some €1 million (\$1.4 million) to develop insecticide synergists for agricultural, household and public health use. The EcoSyn project is aimed at cutting the amount of insecticides used to reduce their impact on beneficial insects such as bees. Based on the interactions of the established synergist, piperonyl butoxide, with metabolic enzymes in insect pests, new

molecular structures will be designed, synthesised and evaluated on pests and beneficial insects using laboratory assays and field trials. The synthesis of these synergists will be evaluated with the aim of achieving an economically feasible industrial process.

The project involves the development of strategies to use the synergists to control insect pests while preserving beneficial insects. It has "significant scientific, economic and social impact as part of sustainable food production and disease control", the consortium points out. The research will be covered by global patent and licensing agreements.

consortium . . .

The project is being co-ordinated by Dr Valerio Borzatta from the Italian agrochemical company, Endura. Other members of the consortium include AgChem Access (UK), Ankara Advanced Technologies Investment (Turkey), Babolna Bio (Hungary), Dewar Crop Protection (UK), Rothamsted Research (UK), Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (Italy) and Vyzkumny Ustav Vcelarsky (Czech Republic).

MEETING

Informa Life Sciences' *Agrochemical Formulation: From Vision to Product* conference will be held at the Maritim proArte Hotel, Berlin, Germany on February 12th–13th 2014. The programme includes: agrochemical formulation R&D updates; a review of the agrochemical sector for formulation experts including enhanced activity and seed treatments; formulation case studies; analysing recent adjuvant developments; formulating biopesticides and botanicals; agrochemical formulation regulations; formulation technologies and innovations; and reviewing spray drift, deposition enhancers and bio-delivery. There are also workshops and seminars, including a post-conference training day on February 14th on global regulation and registration of agrochemical formulations. For more information, contact:

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