

EPA Region 5 – pre-SFIREG Report
06/20/2017

Ed White reported that in 2016, Section 18 emergency exemption requests for use of TOUGH herbicide [pyridate a.i.] on mint were rejected for all six states which submitted requests. The six states included IN, MI and WI from EPA Region 5. The states have again submitted Section 18 requests for the 2017 growing season. We are hopeful that with the modifications made to the 2017 submissions, we will be more successful in securing exemptions for our Region 5 mint producers.

Ohio Department of Agriculture and Office of the Indiana State Chemist received competitive complaints about three TOMCAT repellent products that the registrant, O.M. SCOTT, represents as minimum risk pesticides exempt from EPA regulation under FIFRA Section 25(b). Specifically, the complaints stated that the Tomcat repellents bore use directions for direct application to growing fruits and vegetables. The TOMCAT repellents all contained sodium lauryl sulfate, an ingredient for which there is no tolerance or tolerance exemption for use on growing crops.

Wisconsin recently conducted a groundwater survey; this is done every 7 to 10 years. Groundwater issues related to nitrates and CAFOs are an area of concern in Wisconsin. Statewide, WI has about 8.2 percent of wells that will have nitrates over the enforcement standard. Atrazine residues also were up in the wells. Keep finding lots of low level residues - so the question is what is the significance of a “cocktail” of chemicals in the wells? Forty-two percent of wells have a least one pesticide being found. Enhanced lab capabilities resulted in lab being able to detect over 100 compounds in water samples versus only 35 with previous instrumentation.

The R5 states discussed what they are doing to prepare for applications to dicamba tolerant crops this spring. OISC is still pursuing rulemaking to classify dicamba herbicides as state-restricted use pesticides. The lab is currently seeking to tweak their instruments to achieve lower detection limits. If the herbicide itself cannot be detected, the lab will need to look for metabolites of the herbicide.

State Pollinator Plans – Wisconsin has published their plan and will continue to do monitoring. Michigan has a draft version out for public comment now. Comment period closes June 1st.

Capt. Mike Wilson, former naval aviator now working with FAA, provided a presentation on the use of UAV aircraft [unmanned aerial vehicles] in agriculture. The presentation was very informative. Region 5 states suggest that applications of UAV aircraft technology to agriculture would be an excellent topic for a future full SFIREG meeting since this issue is of national interest.

A number of Region 5 states provided comments on the WPS rule and the Certification & Training rule through the regulatory reform public docket.

PREP Update – Status of scheduled PREPs, 4/6/17 - C&T PREP (IN, MN, WI) participated, 5/16/17 – Water Quality PREP, 7/17/17 – Public Health PREP and 10/23/17 – Laboratory Issues.