

# WINDOW ON AGRICULTURE

## Office of the Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner

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April 2002

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### **DPR MOVES TO CANCEL SOME USES OF CLOPYRALID**

On March 27, 2002, the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) announced in a news release that they are beginning the process to cancel some uses of the broadleaf herbicide clopyralid. Home lawn and commercial lawn uses are being targeted for cancellation. This decision does not affect farmland, rangeland and forest uses. This action is in response to multiple findings of this herbicide in compost. Clopyralid has been detected in compost in Washington State, Australia, and in California. According to reports from Washington State and Pennsylvania State University, clopyralid has been found in compost at levels that affect certain susceptible desirable plants. Plants sensitive to clopyralid include clover, peas, beans, tomatoes, and potatoes.

When clopyralid is used as a broadleaf herbicide on turf, the label states that the lawn clippings are not to be used for compost. This statement was included on the label because the herbicide does not break down readily in compost situations. Due to laws regulating solid waste disposal, most municipal solid waste facilities are encouraging composting as an alternative to disposing of green wastes in landfills. It appears that materials have been composted that should not have been.

Clopyralid is a very important tool for control of Yellow Starthistle in rangeland. It has been estimated that Yellow Starthistle infests 10 to

15 million acres in California. The cancellation of clopyralid for lawn uses is an attempt to protect the use of this important herbicide in thistle control on rangeland.

DPR is sending out cancellation notices to seven registrants who market fifteen clopyralid products. These products are generally marketed to licensed, professional applicators for commercial use.

The registrants, with affected products in parentheses, are: The Andersons Lawn Fertilizer (Tee Time 18-5-9 With Millennium Ultra Herbicide, United Horticultural Supply Professional Turf Products 22-3-4 With Millennium Ultra, The Andersons Professional Turf Products 16-4-8 With Millennium Ultra Herbicide & PCSCU); Dow AgroSciences LLC (Lontrel Turf and Ornamental, Lawn Fertilizer Plus Confront Weed Control, Turf Fertilizer Contains Confront, Confront); Howard Johnson's Enterprises Inc. (Howard Johnson's Weed & Feed With Millennium Ultra); Lebanon Chemical Corporation (Lebanon Proscap Homogeneous Fertilizer With Confront Herbicide Broadleaf Weed Control); Lesco Inc. (Lesco Momentum Premium Weed & Feed); Monterey Chemical Company (Millennium Ultra Selective Herbicide); Riverdale Chemical Company (Riverdale Millennium Ultra Selective Herbicide, Riverdale Millennium Ultra Weed And Feed, Riverdale Trupower Selective Herbicide, Riverdale XRM-5202 TM Premium Weed And Feed).

Washington State authorities banned some uses of clopyralid starting March 1, 2002.

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DPR has the authority to cancel the registration of any pesticide product when detrimental effects on the environment outweigh the benefits. DPR's cancellation notice affects the sale and use of clopyralid in California only. Registrants of clopyralid products could appeal the cancellation, or could voluntarily seek product label changes from U.S. EPA that would address DPR's concerns.

DPR also announced the creation of a clopyralid workgroup that includes members of the compost industry, registrants, the California Integrated Waste Management Board, the California Department of Food and Agriculture, and other stakeholders.

## **EXOTIC PEST DETECTION TRAPPING**

Submitted by Pete Albers

We are beginning the trapping season for exotic insect pests. We set out traps starting April 1 and remove them around October 1. We are looking for the Mediterranean Fruit Fly, Oriental Fruit Fly, Melon Fly, Gypsy Moth, and Japanese Beetle. In 2001, approximately 1,100 traps were set in Sonoma County looking for these exotic, unwanted pests.

Much time and effort is put into the hunt for these exotic pests because they can do so much damage to our agricultural industry and to backyard fruit. Gypsy Moths and Japanese Beetles harm native and ornamental trees and lawns. The exotic fruit flies ruin a wide range of commercial and homegrown fruits and vegetables. This is why it is so important to detect and keep these pests from becoming established in Sonoma County. There will be two full-time seasonal trappers and two part-time trappers to set out and service these traps.

## **SONOMA COUNTY AG. DAY**

Ag. Day was held at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds on March 19 and 20, 2002.

This day is an annual chance for Sonoma County elementary students (K-6) to get a first hand look at agriculture, and to hopefully understand a little more about where their food comes from, and what it takes to bring it to market. About 2,300 students attended Ag. Day

this year, which was sponsored by the Sonoma County Farm Bureau.

Some of the organizations that had booths at this year's Ag. Day included: Clover-Stornetta, Sonoma County Grape Growers' Association, several 4-H clubs, Sonoma County Animal Regulation, Sonoma-Marin Fair, Young Farmers and Ranchers, Men's Garden Club, and the Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner's Office. Our booth this year included a demonstration on erosion control, egg candling, and an interactive game during which the children identified different types of bugs. Some of the other booths had activities and demonstrations that included grafting of grapevines, sheep shearing, wool spinning, and livestock demonstrations.

## **CHEMIGATION OF PESTICIDES**

In order to further ensure a clean water supply, the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) has increased their monitoring of backflow prevention devices on irrigation systems used for chemigation of pesticides.

Backflow prevention devices are required on irrigation systems that are used for applying pesticides. These devices are required to prevent pesticides from entering the wellhead and well through back siphoning in the event of a loss of pressure in the well. There are several types of devices approved for this use.

If you are going to be applying pesticides through your irrigation system please give our office a call at 565-2371 so that we can assist you in making sure that you have all of the necessary devices in place.