

FLORIDA PESTICIDE REVIEW COUNCIL 2007 – 2008 ANNUAL REPORT



SEPTEMBER 30, 2008

**FLORIDA
PESTICIDE REVIEW COUNCIL**

2007-2008 ANNUAL REPORT
(For the period October 1, 2007 to September 30, 2008)

**Prepared by: Mark McLellan, Chair
Pesticide Review Council
October 31, 2008**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Topic	Page Number
I. Executive Summary	2
II. Introduction	2
IV. PRC Members and Status	3
V. Invited Presentations	3
VI. Agency Briefings	4
VII. PRC Actions	7
VIII. Conclusions	7

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I. Executive Summary

The Pesticide Review Council (PRC) convened three meetings during the operating year October 1, 2007 and September 30, 2008. The PRC continued to coordinate pesticide-related efforts among state agencies including the Florida Departments of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), Environmental Protection (FDEP), Health (FDoH), the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Florida (IFAS/UF), and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD). Key issues discussed included the following: legislative and budgetary impacts on programs at FDACS and IFAS; innovative pest management research and outreach efforts by IFAS faculty; Florida registration reviews for iodomethane, a new soil fumigant; regulatory and economic impacts of Federal Reregistration Eligibility Decisions on the soil fumigants chloropicrin, dazomet; metam sodium, metam potassium, and methyl bromide; potential impacts of the insecticide endosulfan on water quality and aquatic life in the Everglades National Park; evaluation of pesticide risks in South Florida ecosystems; stewardship efforts by pesticide registrants; awards to recognize excellence in stewardship programs; farmworker protection compliance activities; and problems with ground water advisory statements on pesticide product labels.

During the reporting period, the Council voted to support FDACS efforts to seek amended policies by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) for ground water advisory label statements.

II. Introduction

This document summarizes the activities of the PRC from October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008 as reported in the minutes of three PRC meetings held on:

- January 15, 2008 (Gainesville, Florida)
- April 23, 2008 (Apopka, Florida)
- September 30, 2008 (Quincy, Florida)

Copies of agendas, minutes and presentations for each meeting may be obtained by contacting the FDACS Bureau of Pesticides as indicated below:

Mail: 3125 Conner Boulevard, Building #6, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1650

Telephone: (850) 617-7917

Website: <http://www.flaes.org/pesticide/pesticidereviewcouncil.html>

III. Administrative Activities

Officers for 2007-2008 were:

Dr. Mark R. McLellan, Chair

Dr. Mel Kyle, Vice-Chair

Dr. Brian Hughes, Secretary

Officers for 2008-2009 will be:

Dr. Mel Kyle, Chair

Dr. Keith Tolson, Vice-Chair

Dr. Brian Katz, Secretary

IV. PRC Members and Status

Member	Affiliation	Term Expiration*
David Eggeman	Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission	Indefinite
Richard Hicks	Department of Environmental Protection	Indefinite
Dennis Howard	Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services	Indefinite
Brian Hughes	Department of Health	Indefinite
Brian Katz	Hydrologist	09/30/11
Mel Kyle	Agricultural Chemical Industry	09/30/08
Mark McLellan	Institute of Food and Agricultural Science	Indefinite
Richard Pfeuffer	South Florida Water Management District	06/30/10
Gary Reeder	Grower/Producer Representative	12/31/10
Keith Tolson	Toxicologist	09/30/11
Vacant	Environmental Groups	

* Members whose terms have expired may continue to serve pending consideration of their re-appointment or appointment of a replacement member by the Governor.

V. Invited Presentations

The following invited presentations were given during the year to provide the Council with information on current pesticide-related subjects:

1. Florida registration review of iodomethane, a new soil fumigant. (1/15/08)

Mr. Mike Allan, Arysta LifeScience North America Corp.

Dr. Artie Lawyer, Technology Sciences Group

Mr. Michael Aerts, Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association

Ms. Jeannie Economos, Farmworker Association of Florida

Ms. Margarita Romo, Farmworker Self Help

Mr. Allan and Dr. Lawyer provided registrant perspectives in support of the pending Florida registration of iodomethane, a new active ingredient for soil fumigation. Mr. Aerts described grower interest in the fumigant as well as economic and regulatory challenges involving its use. Ms. Economos and Ms. Romo opposed the registration, expressing concerns about the potential for iodomethane to harm farmworkers and bystanders and to contaminate ground water.

2. Pesticide risk in South Florida Aquatic Ecosystems. (4/23/08)

Dr. Gary Rand, Florida International University

Dr. Rand described his method to interpret the ecological significance of pesticide residues in surface water samples collected for many years by the SFWMD. His presentation focused on probabilistic ecological risk characterizations for herbicides. Dr. Rand surmised that citrus production may be causing toxic effects on aquatic plants in some areas, but further study is needed for confirmation.

VI. Agency Briefings

Agency briefings are the principal method of information gathering used by the Council. Since the PRC lacks staff support, agency action is the mechanism for implementing recommendations by the Council. During the reporting period, staff from FDACS, IFAS, FDOH, FDEP and the South Florida Water Management District (WMD) provided pesticide-related briefings to the PRC.

A. FDACS

1. Legislative and rulemaking updates. Mr. Anderson Rackley and Mr. Steve Dwinell, Director and Assistant Director of the Division of Agricultural Environmental Services, respectively, discussed the following issues with the Council:

- a bill addressing interstate cooperation in control of introduced pests;
- the favorable outcome of the Department's legislative sunset review;
- significant program reductions due to budget cuts;
- legislation and rulemaking to increase pesticide program fees

2. Iodomethane Florida registration reviews. Following invited presentations (see section V, above) FDACS staff provided an overview of the many issues being considered by the Department and other members of the Pesticide Registration Review Committee (PREC). Issues included toxicology, worker and bystander

exposure, ground water contamination, and compliance and enforcement challenges. Following submission by the registrant of additional data and agreement to produce a significantly revised Florida-specific label that addresses numerous compliance and enforceability issues, the PRC recommended conditional registration for iodomethane products. Registration was granted on July 7, 2008. The Farmworker Association of Florida remains concerned that farmworkers will be adversely affected by the product.

3. Soil fumigant reregistration reviews. Staff from the Bureau of Pesticides and the Bureau of Compliance Monitoring briefed the Council on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA) program to revise risk mitigation for four soil fumigants that have been in use for decades. The active ingredients include chloropicrin, methyl bromide, metam sodium/potassium, and dazomet. Soil fumigants play a critical role in Florida agriculture. The USEPA is proposing sweeping changes to protect workers and bystanders from exposure. Some of the new requirements could result in profound economic impacts on agricultural operations and could burden pesticide regulatory programs. FDACS plans to submit detailed comments to the Agency.

4. Prioritization of pesticide issues of interest. A member survey was conducted to help the PRC rank the importance of various pesticide issues. Among leading issues were protection of surface and ground water quality, alternatives to methyl bromide, cleanup of pesticides in soil and water, and farmworker protection.

5. Pesticide product stewardship. Noting cuts in state regulatory programs at the same time that pesticide product requirements are becoming more complex, Mr. Rackley shared his expectation that registrants must place more emphasis on product stewardship. He described essential elements of effective stewardship, and noted that while many companies have already developed strong stewardship programs, others have more work to do. FDACS has established an award program to publicly recognize leadership in pesticide stewardship. Council members were amenable to serving as independent judges of candidates for stewardship awards.

6. Worker Protection Compliance Activities. Bruce Nicely, Chief of the Bureau of Compliance Monitoring, summarized results of 1241 inspections relating to Worker Protection Standards, of which 254 inspections identified violations (a 20% rate of violation). Violations typically involved requirements for worker training, central posting, decontamination supplies, and provision of personal protective equipment. The Department assessed \$37,200 in fines for worker protection violations. Ms. Sonia Cotto Febo, FDACS Worker Safety Coordinator, reported on a host of ongoing projects aimed at improving access to appropriate safety information for workers and their families.

B. FDEP

1. Ground water advisory label statements. (Joint topic with FDACS and the Ground Water Label Advisory Subcommittee). During reviews by the Pesticide Registration Evaluation Committee, FDEP has encountered pesticide labels with ground water advisory statements. The statements warn that a product may contaminate ground water, but do not inform applicators about precautions that could be taken to avoid contamination. The statements are vague and unenforceable, and they may shift the liability for environmental problems from the registrant to the user. The PRC agreed that these statements are problematic and created a subcommittee (Chaired by Mr. Richard Pfeuffer) to work with FDEP and FDACS to further characterize the problem and to identify potential solutions. FDACS has created a summary paper describing problem statements and proposing solutions for consideration by the USEPA. The Council encouraged FDACS to submit this summary document to the Agency.

C. SFWMD

1. Endosulfan surface water quality issues in South Florida. Mr. Richard Pfeuffer reviewed 16 years of surface water quality monitoring by the SFWMD, focusing on detections of the insecticide, endosulfan, near the Everglades National Park. The Park is concerned with detections of endosulfan residues in water and fish tissue collected inside the Park. The USEPA is currently reevaluating the registration status of endosulfan.

D. IFAS

1. Budgetary issues. Dr. Mark McLellan noted that faltering revenues are causing IFAS to face extraordinary budget reductions, with approximately 150 faculty positions likely to be cut in the first two rounds of reductions and more cuts possible next year. Remaining faculty will need to adopt an entrepreneurial approach, seeking funding from those who benefit from their work. Although IFAS is becoming a “leaner” organization, they will continue to do their best to fulfill their mission.

2. A novel bioherbicide based on a virus-elicited plant defense response. Dr. R. Charudattan, (IFAS, Plant Pathology Department) described his research to use plant pathogens to control weeds, including invasive species. Efforts are currently underway to register tobacco mild green mosaic tobamovirus as biopesticide to control tropical soda apple.

3. Research into low impact alternatives to conventional synthetic insecticides. Dr. Michael Scharf (IFAS, Entomology and Nematology Department) explained how the disciplines of molecular biotechnology and insect toxicology can be coupled to produce targeted approaches for pest control. For example, his laboratory is developing RNA interference for hexamerin, a key developmental gene affecting molting in termites. Efforts are underway to incorporate this material into baits for highly specific control of termites.

4. School IPM and the Termite Training Facility. Dr. Faith Oi (IFAS, Entomology and Nematology Department) highlighted the achievements of the IFAS School Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program in providing information and consultations to help Florida schools manage pest problems and reduce unnecessary pesticide use. IFAS is working with FDACS and DoH on rulemaking that would add an IPM requirement for childcare facilities. Dr. Oi also provided a presentation on the IFAS Termite Training Facility at Apopka, Florida. The Facility provides year-round instruction on termite biology and control to the pest management industry, manufacturers, building inspectors, agencies, and university students. The curriculum is developed in consultation with stakeholders, and emphasizes stewardship and regulatory compliance.

5. The North Florida Research and Education Center (NFREC). Dr. Nicholas Comerfield provided an overview of activities at the NFREC, the most diverse IFAS research center of its kind. The center is the only location with three distinct campuses, each offering an array of research and outreach programs.

VII. PRC Actions

At the September 30, 2008 meeting, the Council unanimously voted to accept the recommendation of the Ground Water Label Advisory Subcommittee that FDACS should submit their analysis of problematic ground water advisory label statements and proposed solutions to the USEPA for consideration.

VIII. Conclusions

In the year 2007-2008, the Pesticide Review Council continued to provide a public forum to identify and scientifically address pesticide issues in Florida. In particular, the Council provided an opportunity for detailed discussion and considerable public commentary on the complex matter of iodomethane registration in Florida. This discussion will help to frame and inform further dialogue on the reregistration of other soil fumigants. The Council also continued to serve as an effective mechanism to minimize duplication and promote efficiency among state agencies that address pesticide issues in Florida. This benefit of the Council grows in value as budgets for pesticide-related activities across the state continue to decline while regulatory issues grow more complex.