



Pesticides post-Brexit

Unease in the farming and horticultural communities about the increasing politicisation of the EC approval system appears to be receiving a sympathetic ear with UK Ministers.

Defra Minister George Eustice has revealed to an NFU meeting that the UK will develop its own approach to pesticide regulation, advised in part through working with technical groups in Europe, Australia and the USA.

In particular, George Eustice said the UK government will pursue a science-based approach to pesticide authorisation decisions. These could be evidence-based using a precau-

tionary principle assessing risk rather than the current EC system, uniquely is based on hazard.

George Eustice does have some positive form in this arena as he previously lobbied Brussels to re-approve glyphosate, pointing out that the European Food Standards Agency had stated that it was "unlikely to cause cancer" and so was not linked to potential ill health. However, politics is a highly movable feast, so it is unlikely that the UK will make any major moves away from the EU regulatory system for some years to come – and in any case will be subject to those imminent Brexit negotiations.

New rules bite over rodenticide use

We are reminded that from 01 October, foresters and gamekeepers will require a certificate of competence in order to purchase professional rodenticides. This comes into force as a result of the UK Rodenticide Stewardship Scheme, which will also require all products to display stewardship conditions on the product labels by the end of March 2017.

Some 16 courses are available around the UK, and once a certificate has been obtained, certificate holders will be expected to demon-

strate their competence though membership of a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme.

For information on a free online course, see www.rodentcontrofarmers.co.uk

Membership of an approved farm assurance scheme which has a structured rodent control programme (currently not UKWAS) will also demonstrate competence, and if non of these are followed then the user will be limited to using amateur products.

Christmas trees growers' guide

It has been my intention to provide an updated version of the Pest and Weed book as pesticide approvals have changed significantly since publication. However, the products used in forestry, amenity and Christmas trees have diverged considerably in the meantime, so it seemed appropriate to instead publish separate books for each sector.

The Christmas tree version is now available (www.ruralservices.info), but has expanded to cover all aspects of the crop – budgeting, species choice, planting, nutrition, harvesting and marketing as well as an expanded section on pest, weed and disease control – as our picture of the back cover shows.

Read the book review on page 50.

GLYPHOSATE BRIEFING



Amenity applications

Contractors and advisors operating in the amenity sector will no doubt be aware that the 2009 Sustainable Use Directive amendments is being interpreted by some member states as prohibiting glyphosate use in amenity areas. However, to date, only Italy and Slovakia have taken this approach, although limited restrictions are pending in France, Germany, Belgium and Holland.

In the UK, no change amenity use is envisaged as the UK's National Action Plan for the Sustainable Use of Pesticides already requires that users should ensure '...that the amount used and the frequency of use are as low as reasonably practicable' when treating "Specified Areas" including '... areas used by the general public, vulnerable groups, areas in the close vicinity of healthcare facilities as well as conservation areas, areas close to groundwater, sealed surfaces and recently treated areas accessible to agricultural workers.'

Regulatory update

At time of writing, no announcement has been made over the decisions affecting the future of glyphosate products. Two decision are pending:

- i) Whether the EU will re-approve the use of glyphosate in Europe following the latest carcinogenicity review.
- ii) The list of UK glyphosate formulations containing POE tallow amines which will be revoked in the very near future. It is likely that around half of the current glyphosate products will be lost, and some popular products such as Clinic Ace are already no longer available, with the price of others rising steadily.

On the other side of the Irish Sea an announcement will be made on 21/22 December, but HSE here are not committing to a date. It is planned to provide a review of glyphosate product availability in the next edition of FTN.

MEMBER SERVICES PESTICIDES HELPLINE



If you haven't used the service to date, be assured it is a free service operated by Confor's crop protection adviser Colin Palmer on behalf of Confor members. Colin can be contacted 8am to 8pm Mondays to Fridays on 01531 633500 (leave a message if necessary) or by email to: branchline@xln.co.uk



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