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EPA SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENT ON ADDITIONAL ECOLOGICAL MITIGATION MEASURES FOR ATRAZINE

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is releasing proposed revisions to the Agency's September 2020 atrazine interim decision (ID) for public comment. The Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) requires EPA to periodically re-evaluate pesticides through registration review to ensure that risk assessments and pesticide decisions reflect the best available science. The ID in the registration review process allows EPA to begin implementing measures to mitigate risks of concern before a final decision is issued.

Atrazine is one of the most widely used herbicides in the United States. It is used to control broadleaf and grassy weeds in a variety of agriculture crops, such as field corn, sweet corn, sorghum, and sugarcane. Atrazine is also used in non-agriculture settings, including nurseries, ornamentals, and turf. The herbicide is an important tool in agricultural production because it is economical, has a flexible use pattern, has long residual herbicidal activity, and is effective against a broad spectrum of weeds. Atrazine is also an important tool in herbicide resistance management, both in controlling weeds resistant to other herbicides and maintaining the effectiveness of other herbicides to control weeds.

In its 2016 atrazine ecological risk assessment, EPA determined that the scientifically derived concentration equivalent level of concern (CE-LOC) for atrazine,

measured as a 60-day average, was 3.4 micrograms per liter (µg/L). This is the concentration of atrazine that, when exceeded, presents a greater than 50 percent chance of negatively affecting an aquatic environment. The CE-LOC is based on effects to aquatic plant communities; however, by ensuring protection of primary producers, the CE-LOC is intended to also provide protection for the entire aquatic ecosystem, including fish, invertebrates and amphibians.

In October 2019, EPA released a memo entitled Regulatory Update on the *Registration Review of AtrazineEXITEXIT EPA WEBSITE*, later cited in the September 2020 ID, that announced a policy decision that an atrazine concentration of 15 µg/L as a 60-day average triggers required monitoring and/or mitigation to protect aquatic plant communities from atrazine runoff. This policy decision did not supplant the scientifically derived CE-LOC of 3.4 µg/L. The currently proposed mitigations, if finalized, would supersede the October 2019 memo.

In October 2020, EPA received a petition alleging that the Agency violated its duties under FIFRA by issuing the atrazine ID without substantial evidence supporting the decision. In August 2021, EPA sought a voluntary partial remand in light of President Biden's executive order EXITEXIT EPA WEBSITE on protecting public health and the environment and restoring a commitment to science and scientific integrity. On December 14, 2021, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals granted EPA a voluntary partial remand, which provided the Agency the opportunity to reevaluate the policy decision to use 15 µg/L as the level of regulation for aquatic plant communities.
Based on its review of the substantial evidence associated with the atrazine ecological risk assessment and a consideration of growers' need for flexible and manageable mitigation measures, EPA is now proposing, for public comment, additional mitigation to protect aquatic plant communities. EPA is proposing the following measures for all atrazine labels in order to decrease atrazine runoff from treated fields:

- Prohibit application when soils are saturated or above field capacity (i.e., the soil's ability to retain water);
- Prohibit application during rain or when a storm event, likely to produce runoff from the treated area, is forecasted to occur within 48 hours following application;
- Prohibit aerial applications of all formulations; and
- Restrict annual application rates to 2 pounds of active ingredient or less per acre per year or less for applications to sorghum, field corn, and sweet corn.

In addition, EPA is proposing to add a "picklist" to labels that would require growers to select a combination of application rate reductions and/or runoff control measures when using atrazine in watersheds with atrazine concentrations that exceed the CE-LOC of 3.4 µg/L. The number of runoff control practices from the picklist that a grower would be required to implement depends on the estimated atrazine concentration in the watershed where the field is located and that watershed's vulnerability to atrazine runoff, as well as the grower's selected application rate. The higher the application rate and the higher the estimated atrazine concentration in the watershed, the greater the number of mitigation practices that may be necessary.

- There are no picklist requirements for fields located in watersheds with predicted atrazine concentrations below 3.4 µg/L (approximately 82 percent of the total number of watersheds nationwide).
- Fields located in watersheds with predicted atrazine concentrations between 3.4-9.8 µg/L (approximately 8 percent of watersheds) would generally be required to choose 1-4 picklist requirements, depending on application rate, crop, region, and soil erodibility.
- Fields located in watersheds with predicted atrazine concentrations of above 9.8 µg/L (approximately 10 percent of watersheds) would have the highest level of required picklist mitigations to select.

The picklist approach provides growers with the flexibility to select the runoff control practices that would be least burdensome to adopt. The practices a grower selects may depend on a variety of factors including crop, geographic region, and field topography. The picklist mitigation requirements are tailored geographically, down to the watershed level, in order to focus the mitigation on the areas with the greatest risk and vulnerability.

The public comment period is now open for the *Proposed Revisions to the Atrazine Interim Registration Review DecisionEXITEXIT EPA WEBSITE* in the atrazine registration review docket ID number EPA-HQ-OPP-2013-0266EXITEXIT EPA WEBSITE at www.regulations.govEXITEXIT EPA WEBSITE. Public comments will be accepted for 60 days upon publication of the Federal Register notice.

After considering comments on the proposed revisions to the atrazine ID, EPA will determine if any changes are warranted to the proposed revisions and then release its decision on this re-evaluation. The Agency also intends to seek external peer review of the risks to the aquatic plant community that underlies this proposed risk management strategy. This is in line with the Agency's commitment to science and scientific integrity, and will incorporate the feedback it receives into its final revisions to the ID.
More information on the registration review process is available here.

More information about atrazine and issues related to this action, including recent litigation, is available on EPA's website.
(EPA, June, 30, 2022)
https://www.epa.gov/pesticides/epa-seeks-public-comment-additional-ecological-mitigation-measures-atrazine

EPA RELEASES DRAFT ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS OF SULFOXAFLOR ON ENDANGERED SPECIES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is releasing its draft biological evaluation (BE)EXITEXIT EPA WEBSITE that contains EPA's analysis of the potential effects of the insecticide sulfoxaflor on federally listed endangered and threatened (listed) species and designated critical habitats. The draft BE will be available for comment for 60 days.

Sulfoxaflor was first registered in 2013 and is used on a variety of crops to target difficult pests, such as aphids and tarnished plant bugs (lygus), as an alternative to older insecticides, including carbamates, neonicotinoids, organophosphates and pyrethroids. The draft assessment finds that, overall, when compared to insecticides like the neonicotinoids imidacloprid, clothianidin and thiamethoxam, and the organophosphate insecticides malathion, chlorpyrifos and diazinon, sulfoxaflor is less persistent and less toxic to most species, which generally leads to lower risks to human health and the environment.

The BE is part of EPA's efforts to meet its obligations under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). This work furthers the goals outlined in EPA's April 2022 ESA Workplan to provide practical protections from pesticides for listed species.

Background on sulfoxaflor

In 2015, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals vacated EPA's 2013 sulfoxaflor registration, citing inadequate data on the effects of sulfoxaflor on bees. Following the court's decision, EPA issued a cancellation order on Nov. 12, 2015, prohibiting the distribution or sale of sulfoxaflor.

In 2016, EPA issued a new, limited registration for sulfoxaflor, allowing its use only on crops that are not attractive to pollinators or in situations that minimize or eliminate potential exposure to bees. These new restrictions practically eliminated exposure to bees in the field, and EPA was able to register certain uses of sulfoxaflor while protecting pollinators.

In 2019, after completing a comprehensive risk assessment of the effects of sulfoxaflor that utilized a large suite of data on potential honey bee effects, EPA expanded the sulfoxaflor registration to include uses on alfalfa, corn, cacao, grains, pineapple, sorghum, teff, teosinte, tree plantations, citrus, cotton, cucurbits, soybeans, and strawberries. EPA also amended instructions for uses that were registered in 2016.

Draft biological evaluation

EPA's draft BE finds that sulfoxaflor is likely to adversely affect certain listed species and designated critical habitats. The "likely to adversely affect" (LAA) determination means that EPA reasonably expects that at least one individual animal or plant, among a variety of listed species, may be exposed to sulfoxaflor at a sufficient level to have an adverse effect. This is the case even if a listed species is almost recovered to a point where it may no longer need to be listed.

In this BE, EPA further refined its analysis to predict the likelihood that sulfoxaflor use could lead to jeopardy for certain listed species or adverse modification of designated critical habitats. In contrast to its LAA determinations, EPA's draft likelihood of jeopardy and adverse modification predictions examine effects of sulfoxaflor at the species scale (population as opposed to an individual of a species). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service (collectively "the Services") will make the final determination as to whether sulfoxaflor use could lead to jeopardy or adverse modification.

As part of its assessment, EPA evaluated the effects of sulfoxaflor on over 1,700 listed species and over 800 designated critical habitats in the United States, determining that sulfoxaflor, without further mitigation:

- Will cause no effect to 36 percent of listed species and 52 percent of critical habitats;
- May affect but is not likely to adversely affect 30 percent of listed species and 35 percent of critical habitats;
- Is likely to adversely affect but EPA predicts the likelihood that use will not:
    - Cause jeopardy to 27 percent of listed species; or
    - Adversely modify 9 percent of critical habitats; and
- Is likely to adversely affect and EPA predicts the likelihood that use may:
    - Cause jeopardy to 7 percent of listed species; and
    - Adversely modify 4 percent of critical habitats.

EPA has begun discussions with the registrant to determine what additional mitigation measures could be implemented in the near term to protect listed species and critical habitats. In response, the registrant recently proposed additional amendments to sulfoxaflor product labels that include certain mitigation measures. EPA may consider mitigations in addition to those proposed by the registrant, such as adding or increasing buffers, imposing geographical use limits, or incorporating additional methods to reduce pesticide drift. EPA encourages public comments on the proposed label amendments and other mitigation measures that may be appropriate.

In this draft BE, EPA used historical insecticide usage data for certain use patterns and use areas to better understand where and how farmers use insecticides that target a similar group of pests as sulfoxaflor. This allowed EPA to better understand where listed species could be exposed to sulfoxaflor. The Agency is also interested in stakeholder comments regarding the usage data that EPA incorporated in the BE.

After considering public comments on the draft BE and any additional mitigations that are agreed upon with the sulfoxaflor registrant, EPA will make any appropriate changes and issue a final BE. If EPA determines in its final BE that sulfoxaflor is not likely to adversely affect listed species and/or critical habitats given the agreed-upon mitigation measures, EPA will enter informal consultation with the Service(s) for their concurrence. If EPA determines that sulfoxaflor is likely to adversely affect listed species and/or critical habitats, EPA will initiate formal consultation and share its findings with the Services. During formal consultation, the Services use EPA's effects determinations to inform their biological opinions (BiOps), which will include the final determinations of whether a pesticide jeopardizes each relevant listed species and/or adversely modifies designated critical habitats. Through the formal consultation process, the Service(s), EPA, the sulfoxaflor registrant, and other stakeholders may develop additional mitigation measures to protect listed species and/or designated critical habitats.

The draft BE will be available for public comment for 60 days in docket EPA-HQ-OPP-2010-0889.

(EPA, July 19, 2022)
https://www.epa.gov/pesticides/epa-releases-draft-assessment-effects-sulfoxaflor-endangered-species-public-comment

STUDY SHOWS FLIES, ROACHES NOT LIKELY TO SPREAD COVID-19

Insects like biting flies and cockroaches are not likely to spread the agent of COVID-19 to humans, according to a recently published article by Texas A&M AgriLife Research scientists.

Public health experts and officials now know much more about the spread of COVID-19, but concerns remained about how the virus spreads indirectly from human to human through contaminated surfaces, animals or insects.

Insects are known to spread many infectious diseases among humans, so evaluating the role of insects in the potential transmission of SARS-CoV-2 was a high priority in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to study co-author Gabriel Hamer, AgriLife Research entomologist in the Texas A&M Department of Entomology.

The team included Gabriel Hamer, Dr. Sarah Hamer, associate professor of epidemiology at Texas A&M's College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, along with the help of research associates and graduate students and other faculty in the Department of Entomology in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and School of Public Health. The lead author, Chris Roundy, was a post-doctoral student in the Department of Entomology at the time and is now working in the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

"We were sampling insects in homes with recent human COVID-19 cases, some of which also had dogs and cats actively infected with SARS-CoV-2," Gabriel Hamer said. "We suspected these were high- risk environments where insects may be able to become contaminated with the virus if they were contacting the infected humans, animals or contaminated surfaces. Instead, we did not detect evidence of the virus in the sampled insects from these homes."

Previous work by the research team, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, discovered the transmission SARS-CoV-2 from humans to pet dogs and cats was occurring in households with confirmed positive human COVID-19 cases. More recently, the team has also been studying SARS-CoV-2 transmission among white-tailed deer in Texas.

Scientists, including the Texas A&M COVID-19 and Pets Project Team, discovered that animals like cats and dogs were susceptible to SARS-CoV-2 infection and could shed infectious virus. But less was understood about the potential transmission by insects, especially through mechanical transmission of contaminated mouthparts.

Previous experimental studies done by other researchers had shown that both the infectious virus and viral RNA were detectable in house flies after being exposed to SARS-CoV-2 in a laboratory setting. The AgriLife Research field study did not find any evidence that these insects were obtaining SARS-CoV-2 viral RNA in natural household settings.

Mechanical transmission would involve the pathogen being transmitted to a human via infectious particles on an insect's body parts, Hamer said. Biological transmission would involve the pathogen entering the insect then growing and increasing before being transmitted through the insect's saliva or feces.

Most vector-borne pathogens, for instance West Nile virus in mosquitoes, are spread biologically, Hamer said. But non-biting flies can transfer bacteria like Salmonella mechanically.

As part of the investigation, Hamer and other AgriLife Research scientists processed the contents of 133 insect traps in 40 homes that each had at least one confirmed human COVID-19 case present. Sticky traps collected more than 1,345 individual insects representing 11 different fly and roach species from June to September 2020.

The insects were tested using quantitative reverse transcription PCR. The liquid in additional trap types was also tested after RNA concentration. The individual insects were grouped into 243 pools, and all tested negative for SARS-CoV-2.

Fourteen traps in seven homes were placed into homes the same day dog or cat samples tested positive for the virus, further increasing the opportunity for the insects to come into contact with contaminated animals or surfaces.

The study presents evidence that biting and non-biting flies and roaches are not likely to spread the virus via mechanical transmission or be useful as a surveillance tool to track the transmission of SARS-CoV-2.

"This study provides more evidence to help narrow down transmission routes of SARS-CoV-2 and evaluates different methods for novel surveillance techniques," Hamer said. "It was a team effort that allowed us to rapidly deploy these traps in high-risk settings to directly assess the role of insects in the COVID-19 pandemic."

(PCT Online August 1, 2022)
https://www.pctonline.com/article/study-shows-flies-roaches-not-likely-spread-covid/

TREATED SEEDS A FOCUS OF CONSENT DECREE

The Environmental Protection Agency will decide by Sept. 30 to spell out how much regulatory oversight is needed for pesticide-treated seeds after the agency opted for five years not to respond to regulatory demands for oversight of treated seeds from environmental groups.

The decision could affect seeds for nearly every corn and soybean acre planted, as well as other crops.

EPA on Wednesday published a proposed consent decree for a lawsuit filed last December by the Center for Food Safety and the Pesticide Action Network North America. The agreement states EPA will decide by Sept. 30 on whether to begin drafting regulations for treated seeds or reject the environmental groups' demands. The two groups had sued EPA because the agency had not responded to a 2017 petition filed by the groups demanding EPA regulate treated seeds as a pesticide rather than allow treated seeds to avoid regulations under EPA's "Treated Article Exemption" in the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA).

In late 2018 and early 2019, EPA asked for public comments on the environmental groups' petition and got back 16,343 total comments on it. EPA then never followed up on how to handle the petition, sparking the lawsuit.

EPA, the Center for Food Safety and Pesticide Action Network agreed to settle the lawsuit with EPA agreeing by Sept. 30 to either grant, deny or deny in part the environmental groups' petition. In doing so, EPA also is opening a public comment period until Aug. 5 for the public and stakeholders such as farm groups to weigh in on EPA's proposed settlement. Based on those comments, EPA or the Justice Department could withdraw or delay the consent decree as well.

Asked for comment, Bethany Shively, a spokeswoman for the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA), said the group, Crop Life America and grower groups continue to stand by comments they had made to EPA in 2018.

"There is no basis whatsoever for any claim that pesticides applied as seed treatments are 'not regulated' by EPA under FIFRA and/or are subject to a 'regulatory loophole.' All pesticides approved for use as seed treatments are subject to rigorous, scientifically robust review by EPA," Shively stated in an email to DTN. "Efforts to require separate and/or additional registrations for seeds treated with crop protection products would unnecessarily duplicate EPA's existing exercise of authority under FIFRA, and place

tremendous burdens on growers, while having no impact on human health or environmental safety."

Amy van Saun, a spokeswoman for the Center for Food Safety, said the group is pleased that EPA has agreed to answer the group's petition and she called for the agency to follow through on the need for regulatory oversight.

"EPA is gearing up to provide an answer to our petition to close the loophole that allows seeds coated with pesticides to avoid the same regulation as regular pesticides," van Saun stated in an email to DTN. "Seed coating is the major way that neonicotinoids are used and have dire consequences for pollinators. EPA should grant our petition and ensure that these crucial pollinators are protected from the harms of coated seeds."

Reflecting some of the challenges farmers have disposing of leftover treated seeds, the Pesticide Stewardship Alliance -- a group made up of primarily the major seed companies -- last month released a 10-state map (https://tpsalliance.org/…) in the Corn Belt showing contact information for state agencies and regulations to dispose of pesticide-treated seeds.

In their lawsuit, the environmental groups alleged EPA's refusal to take action on their petition has allowed "irreparable environmental harms" from treated seeds. The groups noted EPA has never spelled out a rule on its decision to exempt pesticide-treated seeds. EPA instead used a 2013 guidance document on pesticide-related bee deaths to exempt treated seeds from regulation.

Treated seeds are now used on an estimated 180 million acres. As DTN reported a year ago, "The seed treatment industry operates with minimal federal oversight, due to a loophole in EPA's governing law, leaving questions about the amount of pesticides applied via this route and how unused treated seed is discarded each year. In the meantime, a growing number of federal and academic studies are casting doubt on its necessity, particularly in soybean fields. Another body of research is finding most of the pesticides coated on the seeds aren't staying put, with alarming consequences for water quality and wildlife." See "Seed Treatment Overload: The Unintended Consequences of a Popular Practice" https://www.dtnpf.com/….

The lawsuit also cited the accumulation of tens of thousands of tons of treated seed at the now-closed AltEn ethanol plant in Mead, Nebraska, which led to contamination of ground and surface water and continues to be in environmental remediation with more than 84,000 tons of toxic distilled grain piled on the site. University groups continue to study the health effects on people who live in the vicinity.

(Progressive Farmer, July 6, 2022)
https://www.dtnpf.com/agriculture/web/ag/crops/article/2022/07/06/epa-act-regulatory-oversight-treated

SUGAR AVERSION HAMPERS COCKROACH COUPLING

A new study from North Carolina State University shows the behavioral mechanism behind a sweet cockroach mating ritual that takes a bitter turn, resulting in rejected males.

Male German cockroaches (Blattella germanica) offer females a pre-mating “gift” of body secretions that combines sugars and fats – think of the roach version of chocolate – in order to attract and hold female attention long enough to start copulation.

“This is common mating behavior in insects and some other animals: males present females a tasty or valuable gift – it’s like Valentine’s Day, but every day,” said Coby Schal, Blanton J. Whitmire Distinguished Professor of Entomology at NC State and co-corresponding author of the paper.

The study shows, however, that females averse to the simple sugar glucose get an unpleasant surprise when they mix their saliva with the male secretions – saliva degrades the sweet treat of complex sugars to glucose, which becomes a bitter pill that ends the courtship ritual, with the female scurrying away without mating.

“We’re seeing glucose-averse female German cockroaches turning down this nuptial gift – and the chance to mate – and wanted to understand more about

the mechanism behind it," said Ayako Wada-Katsumata, principal research scholar at NC State and co-corresponding author of the paper.

Generally, cockroaches love sugar. But some have developed an aversion to glucose; Wada-Katsumata in 2013 published a paper that showed the neural mechanism behind this aversion in German cockroaches, a behavior that perhaps has become more pronounced due to the presence of the simple sugar in roach baits placed inside homes. In a 2021 paper, Wada-Katsumata and Schal showed that cockroach saliva converts complex sugars into glucose.

"Male cockroach secretions have different types of sugars – in this case maltose and maltotriose, which are usually preferred by females – as well as some fats," Wada-Katsumata said. Maltose is relatively easy to convert to glucose, while maltotriose is more complex and takes a bit longer to break down into glucose, she said.

"Cockroach saliva has a class of chemicals that breaks down sugars," Schal said. "As females feed on their gift, maltose is rapidly converted to glucose, and glucose-averse females sense a bitter taste and stop feeding, which also ends the mating opportunity."

The cockroach mating process is interesting but likely unfamiliar to bipeds. Males approach females, raise their wings, and release chemicals via the tergal gland on their backs. Females attracted to the secretion will climb onto the male's back and feed on the secretion. While she feeds, the male will telescope his abdomen under the female, grab her with an elongated hooked penis and move into position for mating. This courtship process takes only seconds; it is here that the rapid chemical conversion of complex sugars to simple sugars in saliva could kill the mood for glucose-averse females. If successful, though, roaches engage in a back-to-back, up to 90-minute-long mating session, with the male using a second penis to transfer a sperm package to the female.

In the study, the researchers performed various experiments to ascertain how glucose aversion affects cockroach courtship. They found that glucose-averse females more frequently interrupted feeding due to their aversion, especially when feeding from a wild-type male – one that was not averse to glucose. Glucose-averse males often had higher levels of maltotriose in their secretions, which converted less easily to glucose and therefore gave those males extra time to begin mating.

The researchers also changed the quality of the male secretion, substituting fructose for the glucose and maltose secretions. Glucose-averse females enjoyed fructose and fed on it longer, resulting in more successful mating sessions.

"This study is a direct way to show that the quality of secretion affects female behavior and mating success," Schal said. "There is a tradeoff between sexual selection and natural selection. Think of deer as an example. Male deer have horns, not for natural selection – horns actually put males in danger from predators and hunters – but for sexual selection to appeal to females and serve as useful weapons in competition with other males. Similarly, the cockroach's tergal gland evolved for attracting females in the context of sexual selection."

"Wild-type females accept the sugary secretions. Glucose-averse females don't accept the wild-type secretions because they easily convert to glucose. Males can change the composition of secretions – perhaps producing more maltotriose which takes longer to convert to glucose – or try to mate faster. In short, the glucose aversion trait evolved under natural selection, but under sexual selection it is causing the male to modify his sexual secretion and behavior," Wada-Katsumata said.

The 2013 study informed bait manufacturers not to use glucose in baits. The 2021 studies expand this recommendation to all sugars that contain glucose. Baits made with glucose, sucrose, maltose and other sugars will be ignored by glucose-averse cockroaches. As more cockroaches with glucose aversion survive, that trait will be passed down in greater numbers.

"We are constantly in an evolutionary battle with cockroaches," Schal said. "Evolution can be sped up tremendously in the urban, human environment because the selection force imposed on insects, especially inside homes, is so intense."

The study appears in Nature Communications Biology. Postdoctoral scholar Eduardo Hatano, Ph.D. student Samantha McPherson and Jules Silverman, Charles G. Wright Distinguished Emeritus Professor of Entomology, co-authored the paper. The research was supported by the National Science Foundation under grant IOS-1557864, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Healthy Homes program (NCHHU0053-19), and the Blanton J. Whitmire Endowment at NC State. (NC State University News, May 12, 2022) https://news.ncsu.edu/2022/05/sugar-aversion-hampers-cockroach-coupling/

AG LEADERS CALL ON EPA TO PRESERVE CROP PROTECTION TOOLS

Republican leader of the House Agriculture Committee, Rep. Glenn "GT" Thompson, R-Pa., and Republican leader of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, Sen. John Boozman, R-Ark., sent a letter to the Environmental Protection Agency about the concerning trend of disregarding scientifically-sound, risk-based regulatory processes, and unilaterally denying access to a range of crop protection tools.

In a recent interview, EPA Administrator Michael Reagan said, "We don't want the courts dictating to us which pesticides and herbicides should be on and off the market. We want science to dictate that."

And the letter from Thompson and Boozman said they could not agree more. "For years, the registration and registration review process created under [Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act] provided producers with regulatory certainty. Unfortunately, this congressionally mandated process is now increasingly dictated by court edicts or sidelined by the political whims of the Biden administration," the letter says.

In the letter, Thompson and Boozman write, "Russia's war in Ukraine has sent shockwaves through the global food system resulting in increased energy prices, fertilizer cost spikes and shortages, and worsening food shortages in developing countries. As the world faces an emerging food crisis due to this conflict, our policies should be focused on supporting American production instead of creating further burden and ambiguity for our farmers and ranchers."

"One of the most recent attacks—and perhaps the most egregious—came when U.S. Solicitor General Elizabeth Prelogar submitted an amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court on May 10 that reversed course on the federal government's once consistent and decades-long position regarding federal preemption of pesticide labeling," the letter details. Even more alarming is the solicitor general citing a "change in administration" as the basis for this decision and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack testifying that USDA was not consulted in the development of this brief. Recently, the Supreme Court denied the petition to hear this case, the letter says.

The Republican leaders say the decision from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals now stands since SCOTUS did deny the petition. They fear it could potentially "upend the pesticide registration process, creating a patchwork of state pesticide labeling laws and undermining confidence in scientific integrity."

Thompson and Boozman continue, "We once again seek your assurances and commitment to ensure this Administration and EPA cease the politicization of critical crop protection tools, adhere to a science-based and transparent regulatory process required under FIFRA, and defend the work of its career scientists to overcome these misguided decisions from the Ninth Circuit. Such actions would provide farmers and ranchers a consistent and predictable regulatory process necessary for U.S. producers to continue to feed, fuel, and clothe the world."

The letter follows a previous bicameral letter led by Thompson and Boozman on November 19, 2021, which called on the EPA to rescind its decision to revoke all food tolerances for chlorpyrifos and ensure its future actions related to the registration or registration review of crop protection tools are consistent with the science-based, regulatory process required under EPA's congressionally mandated authorities. To date, that letter has gone unanswered, the legislators say. (Southwest FarmPress, July, 14, 2022)
https://www.farmprogress.com/farm-policy/ag-leaders-call-epa-preserve-crop-protection-tools

Find us on Twitter at @OkstatePestEd

CEU Meetings

Please note that many of these meetings are now being done virtual. Please contact the meeting host directly if you have any questions.

Date: August 11, 2022
Title: 2022 Central Oklahoma Turf Conference
Location: El Reno, OK
Contact: Kyle Worthington (405) 262-0155

CEU's:	Category(s):
4	3A
1	6
5	10

Date: August 11, 2022
Title: Tri County Cattle Topics
Location: Ardmore, OK
Contact: Tayler Denman (580) 223-6570

CEU's:	Category(s):
TBA	1A

Date: August 18, 2022
Title: 2022 Oklahoma Fumigation Workshop
Location: Greenhouse Learning Center
Oklahoma State University Campus
Stillwater, OK
Contact: Edmond Bonjour (405) 744-8134
http://orangehub.okstate.edu/

CEU's:	Category(s):
5 pending approval	7C

Date: August 31, 2022
Title: Sooner Cooperative, Inc Private Applicators Training
Location: Kingfisher, OK
Contact: BJ Waeger (405) 226-3125

CEU's:	Category(s):
3	1A

Date: September 28, 2022
Title: ENSYSTEX 2022 CEU Workshop
Location: Hilton Garden Inn· Oklahoma City OK
Contact: Don Stetler (281) 217-2965
https://ceuworkshop.com/

CEU's:	Category(s):
4	7A
2	7B
1	8

Date: October 5-6, 2022
Title: 2022 Fall OKVMA Conference & Trade Show
Location: Hard Rock Hotel Catoosa, OK
Contact: Kathy Markham (918) 256-9302

CEU's:	Category(s):
1	A
5	1A
2	3A
2	5
8	6
1	7A

ODAFF Approved Online CEU Course Links

Online Pest Control Courses
https://www.onlinepestcontrolcourses.com/

PestED.com
https://www.pested.com/

Certified Training Institute
https://www.certifiedtraininginstitute.com/

WSU URBAN IPM AND PESTICIDE SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM
https://pep.wsu.edu/rct/recertonline/

CEU University
http://www.ceuschool.org/

Technical Learning College
http://www.abctlc.com/

All Star Pro Training
www.allstarce.com

Wood Destroying Organism Inspection Course
www.nachi.org/wdocourse.htm

CTN Educational Services Inc
http://ctnedu.com/oklahoma_applicator_enroll.html

Pest Network
http://www.pestnetwork.com/

Veseris
http://www.pestweb.com/

AG CEU Online
https://agceuonline.com/courses/state/37

Target Specialty Products Online Training
https://www.target-specialty.com/training/online-training

For more information and an updated list of CEU meetings, click on this link:
http://www.kellysolutions.com/OK/applicators/courses/searchCourseTitle.asp

ODAFF Test Information

Testing will be done at testing centers in multiple locations around the state by PSI Services LLC.

For more information and instructions, please go to https://bit.ly/3sF4y0x.

Reservation must be made in advance at www.psiexams.com/ or call **855-579-4643**

PSI locations.

Oklahoma City 3800 N Classen Blvd, Ste C-20, Oklahoma City, OK 73118

Tulsa 2816 East 51St Street, Suite 101, Tulsa, OK 74105

McAlester 21 East Carl Albert Parkway (US Hwy 270), McAlester, Oklahoma 74501

Woodward 1915 Oklahoma Ave, Suite 3, Woodward, OK 73801

Lawton Great Plains Technology Center, 4500 West Lee Blvd Building 300- RM 308, Lawton, OK 73505

Enid Autry Technology Center, 1201 W. Willow Rd, Enid, OK 73703

Ponca City Pioneer Technology Center, 2101 N Ash, Ponca City, OK 74601

Norman Moore Norman Technology Center, 4701 12th Ave NW, Norman, Oklahoma,73070

South Penn - Moore Norman Technology Center 13301 S. Pennsylvania, Oklahoma City, OK 73170

If you have questions on pesticide certification. Please email or call:
Kevin Shelton
405-744-1060 kevin.shelton@okstate.edu or

Charles Luper
405-744-5808 charles.luper@okstate.edu

Pesticide Safety Education Program