



**DEPARTMENT OF PESTICIDE REGULATION
PESTICIDE REGISTRATION AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes – November 16, 2012**

Committee Members/Alternates in Attendance:

Syed Ali, State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)
Lynn Baker, Air Resources Board (ARB)
Martha Harnley, Department of Public Health (DPH)
Stella McMillin, Department of Fish and Game (DFG)
Louie Mendoza, California Agriculture Commissioners and Sealers Association (CACASA)
Ann Prichard, Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR)
Rebecca Sisco, University of California, Davis

Visitors in Attendance:

Joshua Adams, Pest Controllers Operators of California
Denise Alder, DPR
Brian Bret, Dow AgroSciences
Amy Duran, DPR
Carlos Gutierrez, DPR
Afiquir Khan, Western Plant Health Association
Dave Lawson, Lawson and Associates
Brian Leahy, DPR
Marshall Lee, DPR
Jeanne Martin, DPR
Najme Minhaj, DPR
Maria Paz, DPR
Randy Segawa, DPR
Martha Sanchez, DPR
Kevin Solari, DPR
Richard Spas, DPR
John Troiano, DPR
Paul Verke, DPR
MaryAnn Warmerdam, The Clorox Co.
Sharique Zuberi, DPR

1. Introductions and Committee Business – Ann Prichard, Chairperson, DPR

- a. About 20 people attended the meeting.
- b. No corrections to the minutes of the previous meeting, held on July 20, 2012, were identified.



2. Non-Fumigant Strawberry Production Workgroup – Marshall Lee, DPR

Marshall Lee of DPR's Pest Management and Licensing Branch gave the committee an update on DPR's efforts to facilitate development and implementation of pest management options for strawberry growers.

As is the case in agriculture generally, it is increasingly difficult for growers to use fumigants, especially strawberry growers wishing to use methyl bromide. Use of methyl bromide in strawberries is about half of what it was a decade ago as use is being phased out under the Montreal Protocol. In fact, continued use of methyl bromide is only allowed under critical use exemptions. In response, use of other common fumigants has increased, but requirements to protect workers, bystanders, and nearby residents are becoming increasingly stringent. California's strawberry industry urgently needs practical and cost-effective ways to grow strawberries without soil fumigants. Currently, there are no known methods – singly or in combination – that replace what fumigants can do. DPR took the initiative to convene the Nonfumigant Strawberry Production Work Group (Work Group) earlier this year to develop a five-year action plan to accelerate the development of management tools and practices to manage soil-borne diseases, weeds, and other pests without fumigants.

DPR recruited a blue-ribbon panel for the work group consisting of: Greg Browne, a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) plant pathologist and chair of USDA's methyl bromide area-wide program in Davis; Bill Chism, a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency biologist and an expert on international agreements to phase-out methyl bromide use; Steve Fennimore, a University of California, Davis, Extension weed specialist in Salinas; Anne Katten, director of California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation's Pesticide and Work Safety Project; Karen Klonsky, a University of California, Davis, Extension economist; Rod Koda, a strawberry grower in Watsonville who grows both conventional and organic strawberries; Dan Legard, the California Strawberry Commission's research director from Watsonville; Pam Marrone, founder and CEO of Marrone Bio Innovations in Davis; Gary Obenauf, a Fresno-based agricultural consultant and chair of the Annual International Conference on Methyl Bromide Alternatives and Emission Reductions; Carol Shennan, a University of California, Santa Cruz, professor of agroecology.

The Work Group met in Gilroy in August 2012 to deliberate and tour nearby strawberry farms and research facilities. Currently, members are continuing to catalogue key concepts and research efforts to define the state of the art in management options in strawberries and to lay the groundwork for future efforts. The group agrees there are no "replacements" for fumigants. Future efforts to manage soil-borne pests will depend on a variety of methods used in combinations that are specific to soil types, microclimates, cropping histories, and economic considerations. The performance of these methods will not likely be as predictable or efficacious as fumigants. The most fully researched and promising methods are steam and anaerobic soil disinfestation (ASD). A lot of additional field work has to be done. Research has been limited to relatively small plots in only a few locations. The key will be demonstrating the practicability of these methods on a large scale and under a variety of

conditions. There are very basic areas that need research too. The complexes of pathogenic and nonpathogenic soil organisms that inhabit strawberry fields are not well understood, nor are the conditions that promote or discourage disease development. There are no easy or inexpensive ways to sample field soil and determine populations of disease organisms in unfumigated soil. Even if growers had such methods, they couldn't use sampling results because treatment thresholds are not defined. Therefore, fumigant applications are typically made prophylactically and soil sampling results are not taken into account. Current breeding programs can typically select for resistance to single organisms, not the complex of pathogens that may inhabit strawberry fields. Soil and pest monitoring could be important tools for pest management decision-making in the future, but will involve changes in practices for many growers. The new methods and practices require considerable knowledge to implement. Whatever different methods are ultimately implemented, growers will have a lot to learn to implement them appropriately. Perhaps current fumigant buffer zones will be a good place to test these methods. Strategies to demonstrate and promote new methods to growers will need to be developed.

DPR expects a draft of the Action Plan to be complete by the end of the year. Also under development is a companion document: a compilation of research summaries, references, and support documents that define what is known about strawberry soil pest management with and without the use of conventional soil fumigants. DPR is also considering options for engaging the public on the action plan and how to best implement it.

3. Worker Health and Safety Outreach Activities – Martha Sanchez, DPR

Martha Sánchez of DPR's Worker Health and Safety Branch (WHS) presented information on the history, development, implementation, content and status of the public outreach and education activities that she participates in across the state. The outreach is intended to create and promote awareness about pesticide safety related issues in farm worker communities. Martha presented the goals of WHS's outreach and education program which included the need to reduce pesticide exposure and illness through education and prevention, how to report potential pesticide exposures, and the need to partner with service agencies throughout the state that could help distribute pesticide safety information to farm workers and other underserved communities they may serve. Martha also discussed the type of outreach (handout) materials and information, such as DPR's 'Community Guide to Recognizing and Reporting Pesticide Problems', type of outreach events attended, and the various means (e.g., public service announcements) used to distribute the message about pesticide safety related issues to farm worker communities.

4. DPR Social Media – Paul Verke, DPR

DPR expanded its outreach and communication efforts to include the world of social media. DPR's goal is to provide information – reports, photographs, videos, pesticide-related news items, event details, training information and program updates using social media and the DPR

website. DPR encourages its stakeholders and the public to take a moment to look at DPR's new sites, and to "like" us on Facebook. The social media sites can be found at the following links:

DPR on Facebook: <<http://www.facebook.com/CaPesticideRegulation>>

DPR on YouTube: <<http://www.youtube.com/user/CaliforniaPesticides>>

DPR on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CA_Pesticides>

5. Proposed Stakeholder Manual – Richard Spas, DPR

Richard Spas, the Pesticide Registration Branch Ombudsman, gave a presentation on a new stakeholder's manual entitled, "A Guide for Pesticide Registrants." The Guide was developed by DPR staff with the assistance of a stakeholder advisory group. The goal of the Guide is to provide DPR's stakeholders with step-by-step instructions for registering, amending, and renewing different types of pesticide products in California. The Guide includes references to California data requirements, study protocols, and standards and will assist new and current applicants/registrants with understanding California's pesticide product registration process. It is designed as an online resource. DPR sent the draft Guide out for comment, and is in the process of reviewing those comments and making changes to the Guide. Once finalized, DPR will post the Guide on its external website.

6. Non-Fumigant VOC Regulation Update – Randy Segawa, DPR

DPR proposed regulations to reduce VOC emissions from non-fumigant pesticides in the San Joaquin Valley. The regulations would designate certain products containing abamectin, chlorpyrifos, gibberellins, or oxyfluorfen as "high-VOC." Pesticide dealers selling these high-VOC products for use in San Joaquin Valley would be required to provide certain information to purchasers. Growers using high-VOC products in the San Joaquin Valley during May-October would be required to obtain a pest control adviser recommendation for applications to certain crops. Certain uses of high-VOC products in the San Joaquin Valley during May-October would be prohibited if pesticide VOC emissions exceeded a trigger level. Based on public comments received earlier this year, DPR proposed revisions to the regulations. Key changes include revisions to the exceptions if the high-VOC product prohibitions are in effect; and flexibility for DPR's Director to remove an active ingredient, crop, or add an exception under certain circumstances. DPR plans to have the regulations in effect by November 2013.

7. Public Comment

None received.

8. Agenda Items for Next Meeting

No agenda items were suggested.

The next meeting will be held on Friday, January 18, 2013, in the Sierra Hearing Room on the second floor of the Cal/EPA building, located at 1001 I Street, Sacramento, California.

9. Adjourn