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Analysis of Diazinon Agricultural Use in Regions of Frequent Surface Water Detections

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September 13, 2011

Abstract

The objective of this analysis was to identify pesticide use scenarios that potentially contribute to the frequent surface water detections of diazinon in agricultural regions of California. Crop treated, pesticide product formulation, and pesticide application method were examined. The study targeted five regions with frequent detections and high concentrations in surface water: Salinas Valley, Sacramento Valley, San Joaquin Valley, Santa Maria Valley and Imperial Valley. Using surface water monitoring data from 2005 to 2010, sites with the most frequent exceedance of the 100 ng/L target concentration were identified in each of the five regions. For drainage basins where the identified monitoring sites were located, pesticide use was summarized by crop type, product formulation and application method. Salinas Valley had the highest use of diazinon between 2005 and 2010 accounting for about 35% of the statewide use. Sacramento Valley was the second-highest use region accounting for 14% of the statewide use. Uses in San Joaquin Valley, Imperial Valley and Santa Maria Valley were relatively lower, accounting for 9%, 6% and 2% of the statewide use, respectively. Top use crops in high detection areas varied among different regions with lettuce, broccoli and cauliflower being the top ones in the Lower Salinas Valley. Application method and product formulations did not vary significantly between areas with high and low detections. The majority of diazinon applications were made through ground application using EC formulated products. This analysis suggests that diazinon detections in surface water likely did not occur primarily due to the application method or formulation type. Besides use amount, other factors such as irrigation method, spray drift, timing of application, soil type, slope and field management practices are likely more relevant to the offsite movement of diazinon.

I. INTRODUCTION

Diazinon is a broad-spectrum organophosphate insecticide currently used in California on a wide variety of agricultural crops. Non-agricultural uses of diazinon were phased out during 2002-2004, after which detections of diazinon in urban areas have decreased significantly (Starner, 2006). However, the pesticide is still frequently detected in streams in agricultural areas of California (Starner, 2009). California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) placed diazinon

dormant spray products into re-evaluation in early 2003. The re-evaluation was further expanded in 2010 to include in-season agricultural uses.

The expansion of the re-evaluation was based on analysis results from Starner (2009), which suggested that diazinon was frequently detected in areas with in-season agricultural use. Starner's analysis was based on surface water monitoring data between 2003 and 2008 (Starner 2009). Per requirement by the expanded re-evaluation, the registrant (Makhteshim-Agan of North America, INC.) assembled and summarized diazinon water column monitoring data between 2005 and 2010. Their report indicated that diazinon was still frequently detected in agricultural areas of California with concentrations exceeding the target concentration of 100 ng/L. This target concentration is the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) developed by California State Water Resources Control Board for the San Joaquin and Sacramento River Watershed (California State Water Resources Control Board, 2008). It is the lowest water quality criteria for diazinon currently used in the United States.

II. OBJECTIVE

Diazinon is used in California throughout the year: mainly on vegetable crops during the irrigation season and dormant tree crops during wet season. Between 2005 and 2010, more than 274,000 pounds of diazinon active ingredient (AI) were used each year in California. The objective of this analysis was to identify diazinon use scenarios that potentially contribute to its frequent detections in surface waters of California.

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This analysis targeted diazinon use scenarios in areas with frequent detections at high concentrations. First, monitoring sites with the most frequent exceedance of the 100 ng/L target concentration were identified using monitoring data from 2005 to 2010. Second, drainage areas contributing to these sites were identified using CalWater 2.2 watershed maps that were developed by the California Interagency Watershed Mapping Committee (USDA 2009). Finally, diazinon use data in the drainage areas was summarized to identify the top use scenarios.

Surface water monitoring data

Diazinon monitoring data for years 2005 to 2010 was from the report entitled "Summary of diazinon water column monitoring data for nine California regions: 2005-2010" which was submitted to DPR by Hall and Anderson (2011) on behalf of Makhteshim-Agan of North America, INC. The report assembled and summarized monitoring data from the nine use regions in California as identified in Starner (2009): Sacramento Valley Region, San Joaquin Valley Region, Pajaro Region, Salinas Valley Region, Tulare Region, Santa Maria Valley Region, Antelope Region, Ventura Region and Imperial Valley Region. Diazinon monitoring data was reported from 282 sites from these nine use regions containing 3,732 measurements from 2005 to 2010 (Table 1). The highest concentration (24,465 ng/L) was reported in the Salinas Valley Region. Among the nine use regions, Salinas Valley, Santa Maria Valley and Imperial Valley Region have the highest percentage of samples exceeding the target concentration of 100 ng/L (61.9%, 66.7% and 24.1%, respectively). In terms of sample numbers, Salinas Valley, San Joaquin Valley and Sacramento Valley Region have the largest number of samples exceeding

the same target concentration (151, 60, and 44, respectively). Therefore, these five regions were selected as our study area. Monitoring sites with highest exceedance as well as top use scenarios were identified in these five regions.

Pesticide use data

Diazinon use information between 2005 and 2010 was collected from DPR's Pesticide Use Reporting (PUR) database (DPR 2011). PUR data was mapped with the basic spatial unit of township/range/sections. Applications occurring within the contributing drainage area of a certain site were identified by overlaying the GIS maps of township/range/sections with CalWater2.2 watershed boundaries. Crops with top diazinon use (pounds of active ingredients (AI)) were then identified in each drainage area.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Statewide Diazinon Use

Statewide diazinon use decreased by 75% from 2005 to 2010 in both total pounds of AI and applied acreage (Table 2, 3 and Fig 1). Diazinon use in Salinas Valley was the highest among all the regions, accounting for 35% of the total pounds and 80% of the applied acreages (Table 2 and 3). Sacramento Valley ranked the second accounting for 14% of the statewide use (Table 2). Uses in San Joaquin Valley, Imperial Valley and Santa Maria Valley were relatively lower, accounting for 9%, 6% and 2% of the statewide use, respectively.

Table 4 and 5 summarized diazinon use by application method and product formulation for areas with frequent detections in the five study regions. Application method and product formulation did not differ significantly among different regions. Most of the applications were made through ground application using EC formulated products (Table 4, 5). Although Salinas Valley has more frequent detections and more exceedance compared to other regions, application method and product formulation are similar. Therefore, diazinon detections in surface water likely did not occur primarily due to the application method or formulation type. Besides use amount, other factors such as irrigation method, timing of application, soil type, slope and field management practices are likely more relevant to the offsite movement of diazinon.

Salinas Valley Region

Thirty-three sites were monitored for diazinon in Salinas Valley with data available from 2005 to 2008. A total of 244 samples were taken, 61.9% of which exceeded the target concentration of 100 ng/L (Table 1). All the sites with exceedances were located in the Lower Salinas Valley basin (Fig 2). A total of 380,508 lbs of diazinon were used in the Lower Salinas Valley Region between 2005 and 2010 accounting for over 63% of the use in the entire valley. Diazinon was mainly used on lettuce (head and leaf), broccoli, cauliflower and spinach (Table 4 and 5). Use of diazinon on lettuce alone accounted for about 77% of the total diazinon use in the area between 2005 and 2010. Diazinon was used throughout the year with the majority of applications occurring during the irrigation season between March and September (Fig. 3). Almost all the applications were implemented through ground application (Table 4). On lettuce, more than half of the applied diazinon was formulated as emulsifiable concentrate (EC) and over 20% was

formulated as wettable powder (WP) (Table 5). On broccoli, cauliflower and spinach, EC products accounted for over 95% of the applied amount (Table 5).

The frequent detection of diazinon in Salinas Valley likely resulted from the great amount of use on a relatively small watershed. Since pesticide application method and product formulation are similar to other regions with few detections, it is unlikely that these two factors contribute significantly to offsite movement of diazinon.

Sacramento Valley Region

Seventy-three sites were monitored for diazinon in Sacramento Valley with data available from 2005 to 2010. A total of 850 samples were taken, 5.2% of which exceeded the target concentration of 100 ng/L (Table 1). Sites with exceedances were located at 10 drainage basins spread throughout in the entire valley (Fig 4). Between 2005 and 2010, a total of 152,702 lbs of diazinon were used in these drainage basins accounting for 75% of the use in the entire Valley. Diazinon was mainly used on tree crops (prune, peach, walnut, almond and cherry) and processing tomatoes (Table 4). Applications occurred mostly in January through May with very few applications after August (Fig. 5). Almost all the applications were implemented through ground application using EC formulated products except for walnut, on which 32% of the applications were aerial and 20% of used products were WP (Table 4 and 5).

Compared to Salinas Valley, Sacramento Valley had less frequent detections and exceedances. This could be due to the lower amount of pesticide use and relatively larger watershed area. Other factors such as irrigation method, soil and slope may also play a role. However, application method and product formulation likely did not.

San Joaquin Valley Region

A total of 121 sites were monitored for diazinon from 2005 to 2010 in San Joaquin Valley Region. Among the 2,465 samples taken, 2.4% exceeded the target concentration of 100 ng/L (Table 1). Sites with exceedances were located at four drainage basins: Lower Mokelumne basin, San Joaquin Delta basin, Delta-Mendota Canal basin and Madera basin (Fig. 6). A total of 28,295 lbs of diazinon were used in these four basins between 2005 and 2010 accounting for 21% of the use in the entire valley. Diazinon was mainly used on tree crops (cherry, peach, almond, apple and prune) and corn (Table 4). Applications occurred in almost every month from January to September with fewer in October, November and December (Fig. 7). Almost all the applications were implemented through ground application using EC formulated products except for corn and apple. Applications on corn were mainly aerial using EC products. All the diazinon products used on apples were WP sprayed via ground application (Table 4 and 5).

Imperial Valley Region

Twelve sites were monitored for Diazinon in the Imperial Valley with data available from 2005 to 2008. A total of 58 samples were taken, 24.1% of which exceeded the target concentration of 100 ng/L (Table 1). Exceedances occurred in eight of the twelve sites (Fig 8). Between 2005 and 2010, a total of 105,761 lbs of diazinon were used in this valley. Diazinon was mainly used on sugarbeet, lettuce, broccoli, carrots and onion, accounting for 90% of the use in the entire valley

(Table 4). Applications occurred mostly in winter months from September to December (Fig. 9). Ground application and EC products still being the majority but to a less degree compared to other regions (Table 4). For sugarbeet, 89% of the diazinon was applied aerially using mostly EC products (Table 4 and 5).

Santa Maria Valley Region

Twelve sites were monitored for Diazinon in the Santa Maria Valley with data available from 2005 to 2009. Most of the sites were sampled only once except for one site that was sampled 10 times. However, the detected concentrations were high with the majority of them exceeding the target concentration (Table 1). Eight of the twelve sites exceeded the target concentration (Fig. 10). Crop use of diazinon in Santa Maria Valley was much less compared to the other four regions with over 27,700 lbs of diazinon AI, composing 2% of the statewide use between 2005 and 2010. Major diazinon use crops include lettuce (head, leaf), broccoli and cauliflower accounting for over 81% of the total use in the region (Table 4). The majority of the applications occurred during the irrigation season between March and September (Fig. 11). Like other regions, diazinon was applied mainly through ground applications using EC products (Table 4 and 5).

V. CONCLUSIONS

Diazinon is currently used on various agricultural crops in California throughout the year. Monitoring data indicated that the pesticide was still frequently detected with levels exceeding target concentrations. Areas with frequent diazinon detections include Salinas Valley, San Joaquin Valley, Imperial Valley and Santa Maria Valley. Salinas Valley has the highest use by total amount of diazinon AI, accounting for more than 35% of the statewide use. Sacramento Valley ranked second accounting for 14% of the statewide use. Uses in San Joaquin Valley, Imperial Valley and Santa Maria Valley were relatively lower, accounted for 9%, 6% and 2% of the statewide use, respectively. Top use crops vary among different regions. However, application method and product formulations were relatively consistent, with ground application and EC formulation being dominant. Application method and product formulation did not vary significantly between areas with high and low detection frequency. The analysis suggests that diazinon detections in surface water likely did not result primarily due to application method or formulation type. Besides use amount, other factors such as irrigation method, spray drift, timing of application, soil type and field management practices are likely more relevant to the off-site movement of diazinon into surface water. Several of these factors are crop-specific; as such, investigation into the relevance of those factors might best be focused on crops with high use in regions with frequent detections of diazinon in surface water.

VI. REFERENCES

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TABLES

Table 1. Summary of diazinon monitoring data (2005-2010) for the 9 California use regions. A target concentration of 100 ng/L was used to determine number of exceedances and percent exceedance

Agricultural Region	# of Sites	Mainstem Sites	Tributary Sites	Years of Data	# of Conc.	Conc. Range (ng/L)	% of ND Conc.	# of Exceedances	% of Exceedances
Sacramento	73	5	68	2005-2010	850	ND-2500	69.8	44	5.2
San Joaquin	121	13	108	2005-2010	2465	ND-1200	90.0	60	2.4
Pajaro	18	5	13	2006-2007	36	ND-289	75.0	1	2.8
Salinas	33	10	23	2005-2008	244	ND-24465	9.0	151	61.9
Tulare	13	4	9	2005-2006	58	ND-75	75.9	0	0.0
Santa Maria	12	1	11	2005-2008	21	ND-977	9.5	14	66.7
Antelope	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ventura	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Imperial	12	8	4	2005-2008	58	ND-3240	48.3	14	24.1
All Regions	282	46	236	2005-2010	3732	ND-24465	78.6	284	7.6

Table 2. Total diazinon use in different regions of California by pounds of active ingredient, 2005 - 2010

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Average
Statewide	403,798	386,244	353,098	258,533	142,059	102,087	274,303
Salinas Valley (% of statewide)	153,487 (38%)	133,593 (35%)	132,869 (38%)	109,147 (42%)	46,426 (33%)	27,672 (27%)	100,532 (35%)
Sacramento Valley	42,756 (11%)	45,312 (12%)	36,671 (10%)	28,768 (11%)	27,162 (19%)	23,467 (23%)	34,023 (14%)
San Joaquin Valley	34,318 (8%)	28,120 (7%)	22,304 (6%)	18,637 (7%)	14,177 (10%)	15,861 (16%)	22,236 (9%)
Imperial Valley	30,880 (8%)	30,509 (8%)	24,730 (7%)	12,219 (5%)	5,212 (4%)	2,212 (2%)	17,627 (6%)
Santa Maria Valley	6,369 (2%)	5,614 (1%)	4,936 (1%)	5,964 (2%)	2,888 (2%)	2,232 (2%)	4,667 (2%)

Table 3. Total acres of agricultural fields with diazinon applications between 2005 and 2010

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Statewide	966,885	838,806	2,058,852	1,567,700	775,038	246,987
Salinas Valley (% of statewide)	689,461 (71%)	588,058 (70%)	1,824,881 (89%)	1,391,320 (89%)	672,675 (87%)	179,250 (73%)
Sacramento Valley	34,182	31,014	26,890	23,689	20,983	16,325
San Joaquin Valley	25,321	27,364	19,480	15,522	10,488	10,670
Imperial Valley	49,054	47,012	40,473	21,157	10,768	4,479
Santa Maria Valley	34,006	14,985	7,561	19,963	7,186	5,185

Table 4 Diazinon use by application method on major crops in areas with frequent detections and exceedances, 2005-2010

	Crop	Ground		Aerial		Other		Total
		lbs	%	lbs	%	lbs	%	lbs
Salinas Valley	Lettuce, Leaf	151,235	96%	5,585	4%	101	0%	156,921
	Lettuce, Head	132,028	96%	5,206	4%	0	0%	137,234
	Broccoli	40,962	99%	445	1%	0	0%	41,408
	Cauliflower	17,957	99%	222	1%	40	0%	18,220
	Spinach	17,552	100%	55	0%	0	0%	17,607
	All crops (Total)	368,295	97%	12,071	3%	141	0%	380,508
Sacramento Valley	Prune	52,177	99%	673	1%	0	0%	52,850
	Processing tomatoes	36,306	100%	0	0%	119	0%	36,426
	Peach	35,776	100%	110	0%	0	0%	35,885
	Walnut	8,158	68%	3,904	32%	0	0%	12,062
	Almond	8,644	93%	670	7%	0	0%	9,314
	Cherry	1,894	100%	0	0%	0	0%	1,894
	All crops (Total)	146,974	96%	5,464	4%	119	0%	152,557
San Joaquin Valley	Cherry	11,701	99%	75	1%	0	0%	11,776
	Peach	6,756	100%	0	0%	0	0%	6,756
	Almond	5,868	97%	198	3%	0	0%	6,067
	Corn	55	1%	5,194	99%	0	0%	5,249
	Apple	3,689	100%	0	0%	0	0%	3,689
	Prune	2,423	100%	0	0%	0	0%	2,423
	All crops (Total)	39,766	86%	6,384	14%	121	0%	46,272
Imperial Valley	Sugarbeet	3,323	11%	26,668	89%	79	0%	30,070
	Lettuce, Head	12,213	50%	4,527	19%	7,677	31%	24,416
	Broccoli	7,427	55%	3,552	26%	2,644	19%	13,623
	Lettuce, Leaf	6,592	54%	1,536	12%	4,163	34%	12,291
	Carrots	6,186	74%	61	1%	2,094	25%	8,340
	Onion	3,863	65%	476	8%	1,619	27%	5,958
	All crops (Total)	46,767	44%	39,591	37%	19,403	18%	105,761
Santa Maria Valley	Lettuce, Head	7,728	86%	1,214	13%	51	1%	8,993
	Broccoli	7,155	82%	1,620	18%	0	0%	8,775
	Lettuce, Leaf	1,905	87%	282	13%	0	0%	2,187
	Cauliflower	1,780	99%	15	1%	0	0%	1,795
	Carrots	1,361	100%	0	0%	0	0%	1,361
	Spinach	1,329	100%	0	0%	0	0%	1,329
	All crops (Total)	24,424	88%	3,224	12%	51	0%	27,700

Table 5 Diazinon use by formulation type on major crops in areas with frequent detection and exceedances, 2005-2010

	Crop	EC		Wettable Powder		Other		Total
		lbs	%	lbs	%	lbs	%	lbs
Salinas Valley	Lettuce, Leaf	96,887	62%	35,830	23%	24,204	15%	156,921
	Lettuce, Head	79,438	58%	30,056	22%	27,740	20%	137,234
	Broccoli	39,983	97%	557	1%	868	2%	41,408
	Cauliflower	17,554	96%	128	1%	539	3%	18,220
	Spinach	17,574	100%	34	0%	0	0%	17,607
	All crops (Total)	257,614	68%	68,169	18%	54,724	14%	380,508
Sacramento Valley	Prune	50,346	95%	1,765	3%	738	1%	52,850
	Processing tomatoes	35,258	97%		0%	1,168	3%	36,426
	Peach	35,753	100%	60	0%	73	0%	35,885
	Walnut	9,566	79%	2,455	20%	41	0%	12,062
	Almond	9,282	100%	32	0%	0	0%	9,314
	Cherry	1,853	98%	22	1%	20	1%	1,894
	All crops (Total)	145,349	95%	4,884	3%	2,325	2%	152,557
San Joaquin Valley	Cherry	387	3%	11,388	97%		0%	11,776
	Peach	6,633	98%	123	2%		0%	6,756
	Almond	5,795	96%	272	4%		0%	6,067
	Corn	5,249	100%		0%		0%	5,249
	Apple		0%	3,689	100%		0%	3,689
	Prune	796	33%	1,627	67%		0%	2,423
	All crops (Total)	26,344	57%	19,901	43%	26	0%	46,272
Imperial Valley	Sugarbeet	21,291	71%	5,963	20%	2,817	9%	30,070
	Lettuce, Head	13,192	54%	316	1%	10,908	45%	24,416
	Broccoli	6,658	49%	25	0%	6,940	51%	13,623
	Lettuce, Leaf	5,855	48%	582	4%	5,854	48%	12,291
	Carrots	8,275	99%	35	0%	29	0%	8,340
	Onion	5,315	89%	105	2%	538	9%	5,958
	All crops (Total)	68,997	65%	7,257	7%	29,506	28%	105,761
Santa Maria Valley	Lettuce, Head	8,977	100%	16	0%		0%	8,993
	Broccoli	8,766	100%	9	0%		0%	8,775
	Lettuce, Leaf	2,153	98%	34	2%		0%	2,187
	Cauliflower	1,795	100%		0%		0%	1,795
	Carrots	1,361	100%		0%		0%	1,361
	Spinach	1,329	100%		0%		0%	1,329
	All crops (Total)	27,352	99%	332	1%	17	0%	27,700

FIGURES

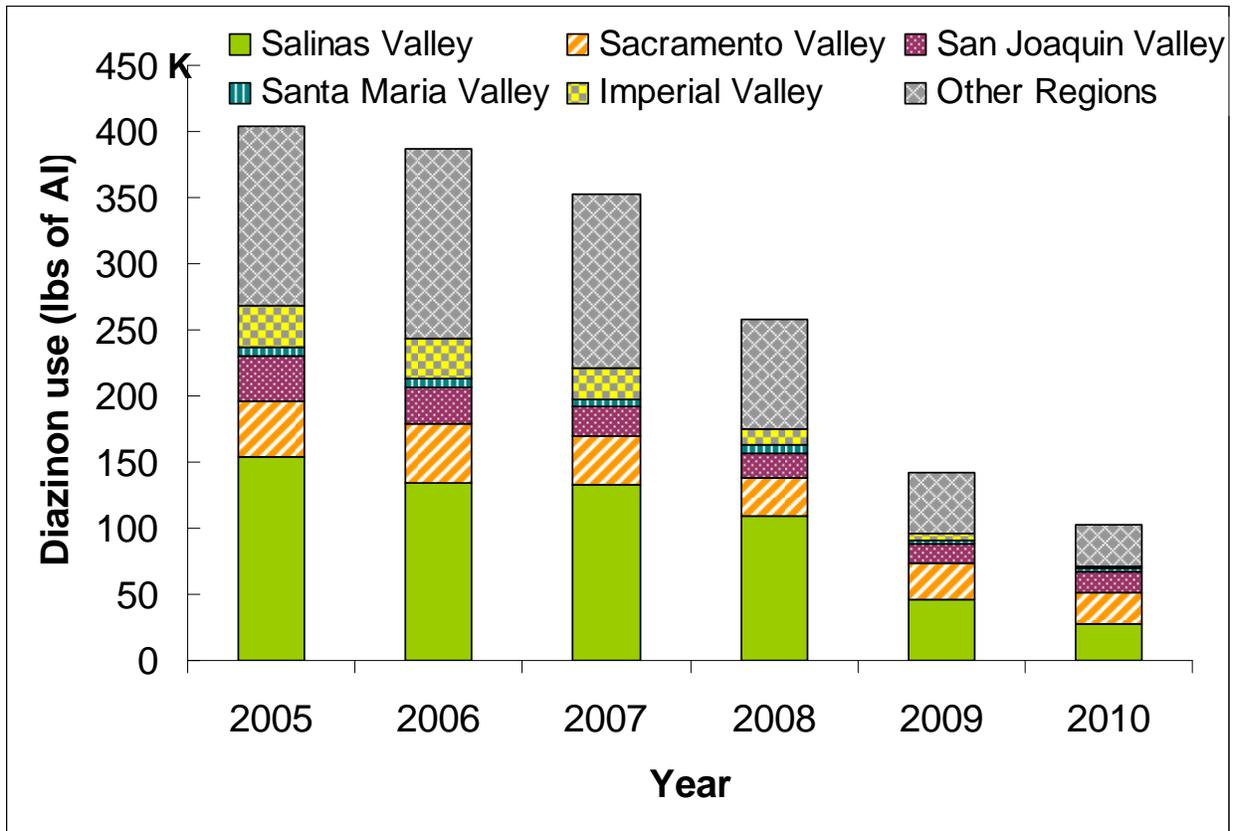


Fig 1. Diazinon use in different regions of California by pounds of active ingredients

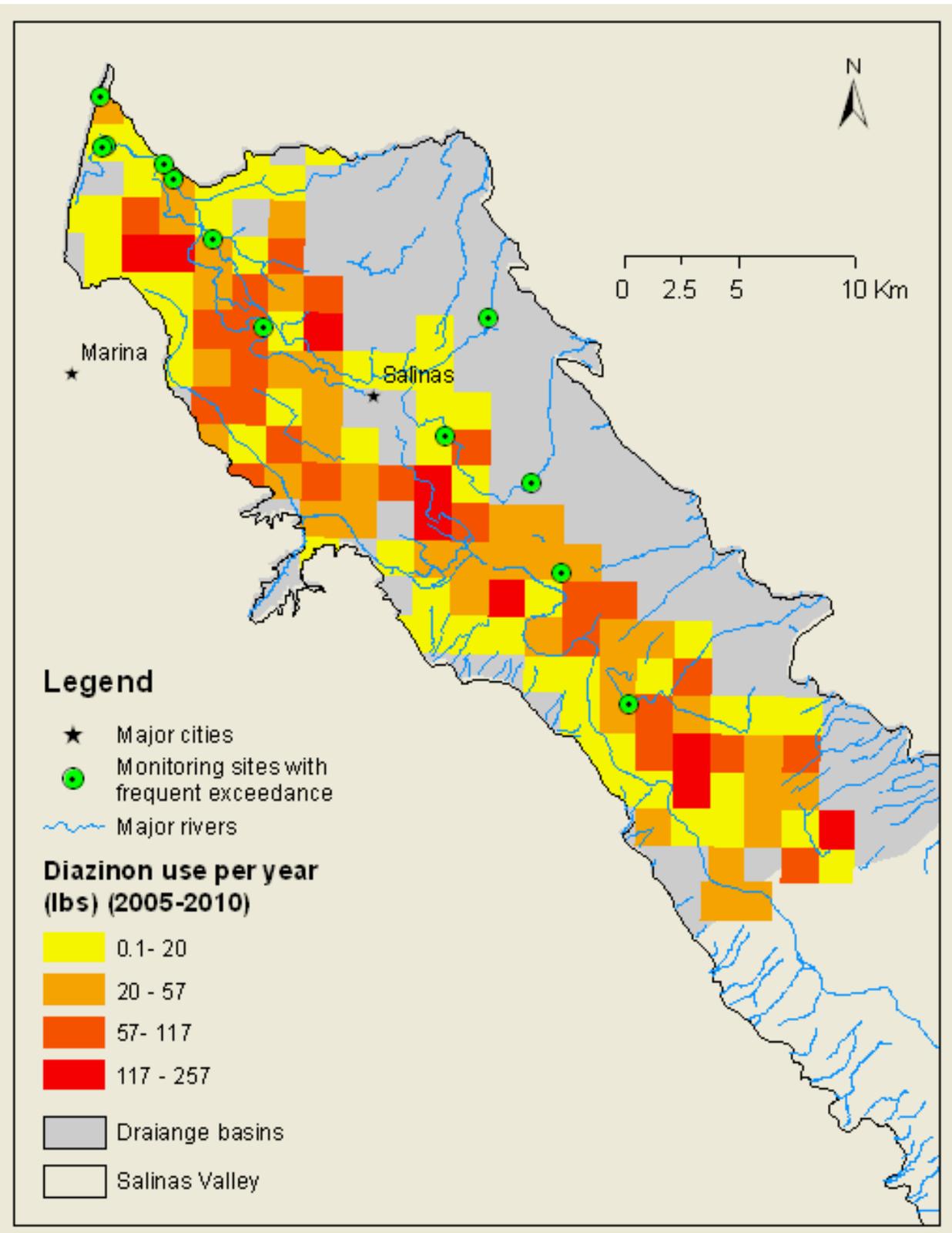


Fig. 2: Salinas Valley monitoring sites with most exceedances and diazinon use within their drainage basins

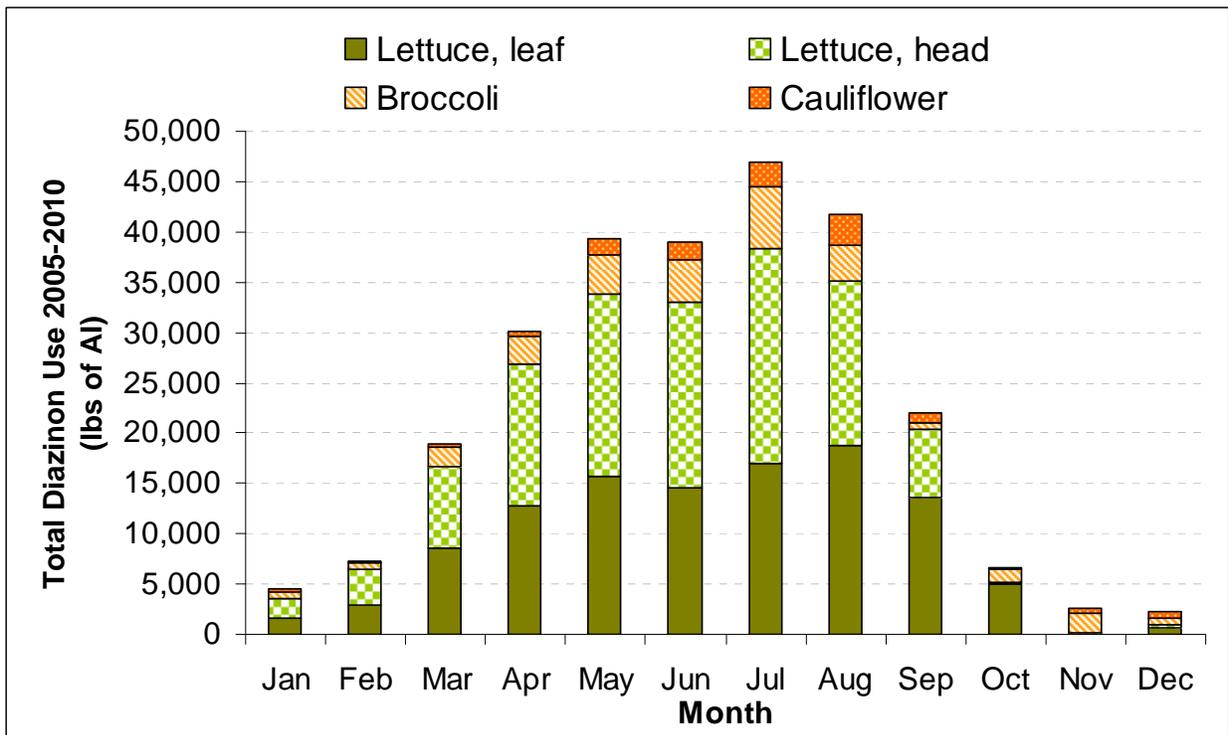


Fig. 3. Diazinon use on major crops in the Lower Salinas Valley 2005 -2010.

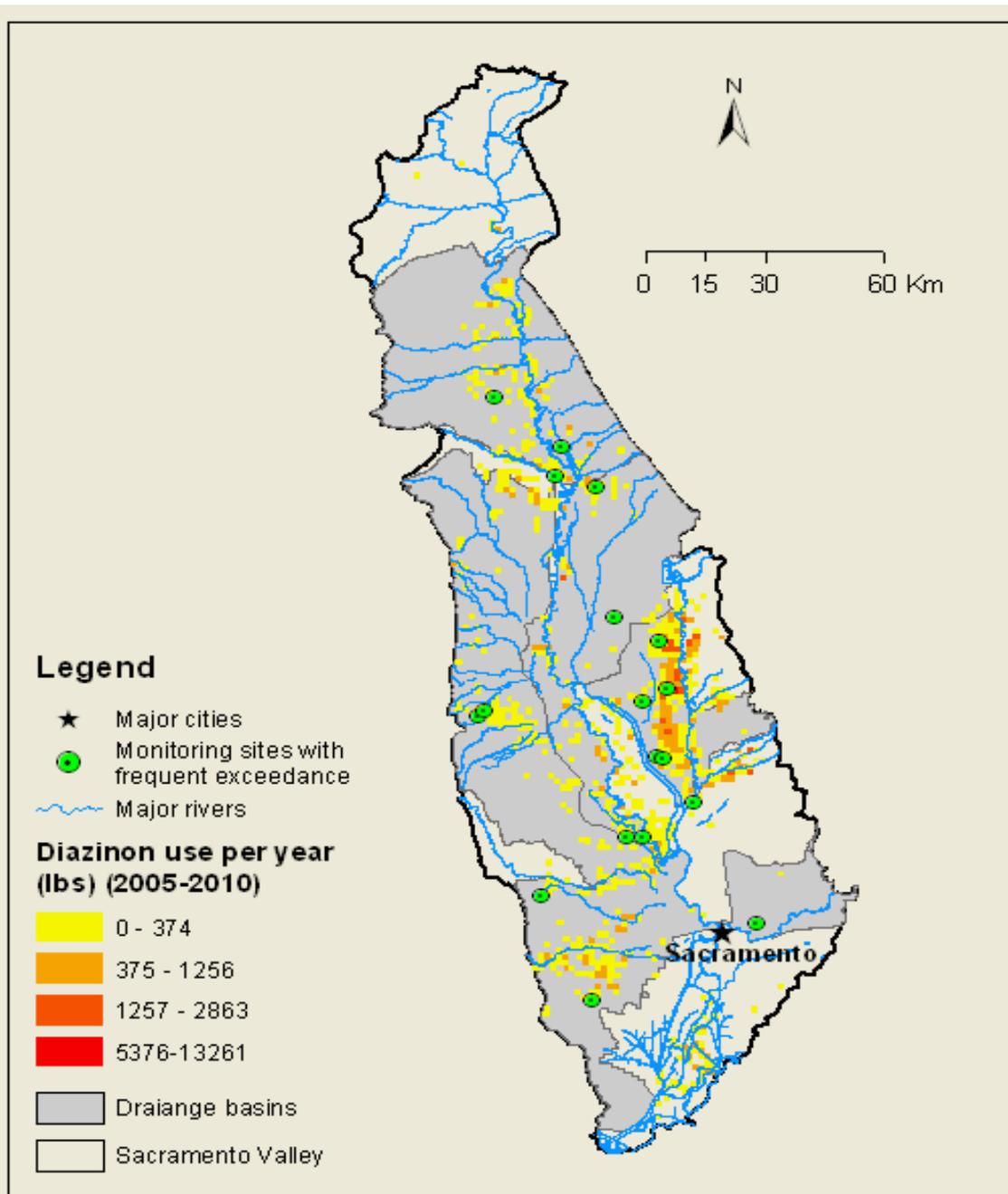


Fig. 4: Sacramento Valley monitoring sites with most exceedances and diazinon use within their drainage basins

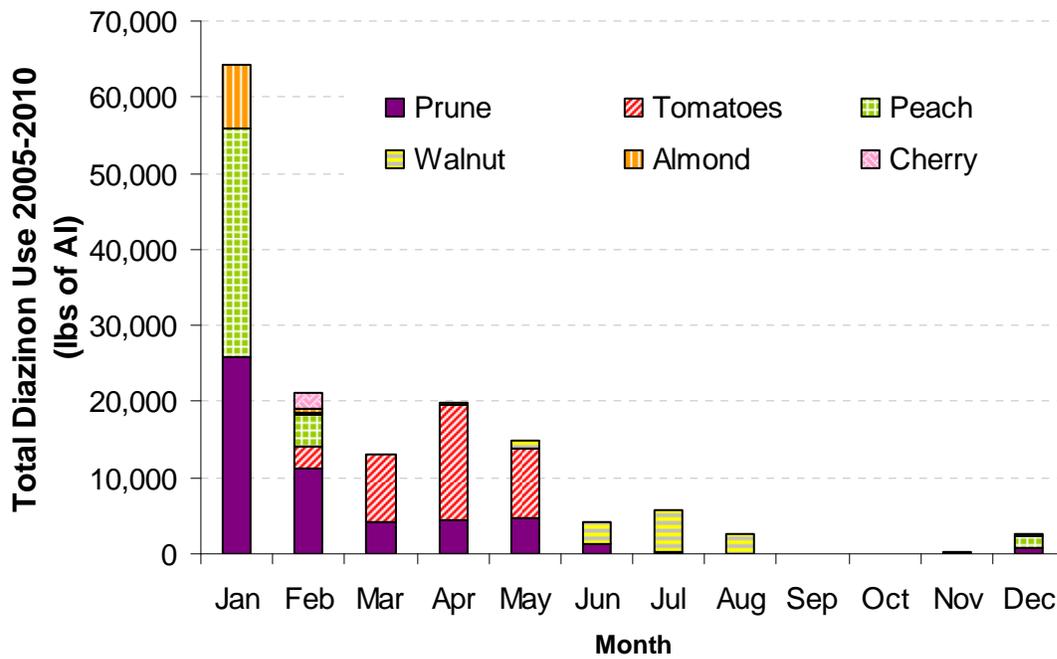


Fig. 5 Diazinon use on major crops in high detected areas of Sacramento Valley 2005 -2010.

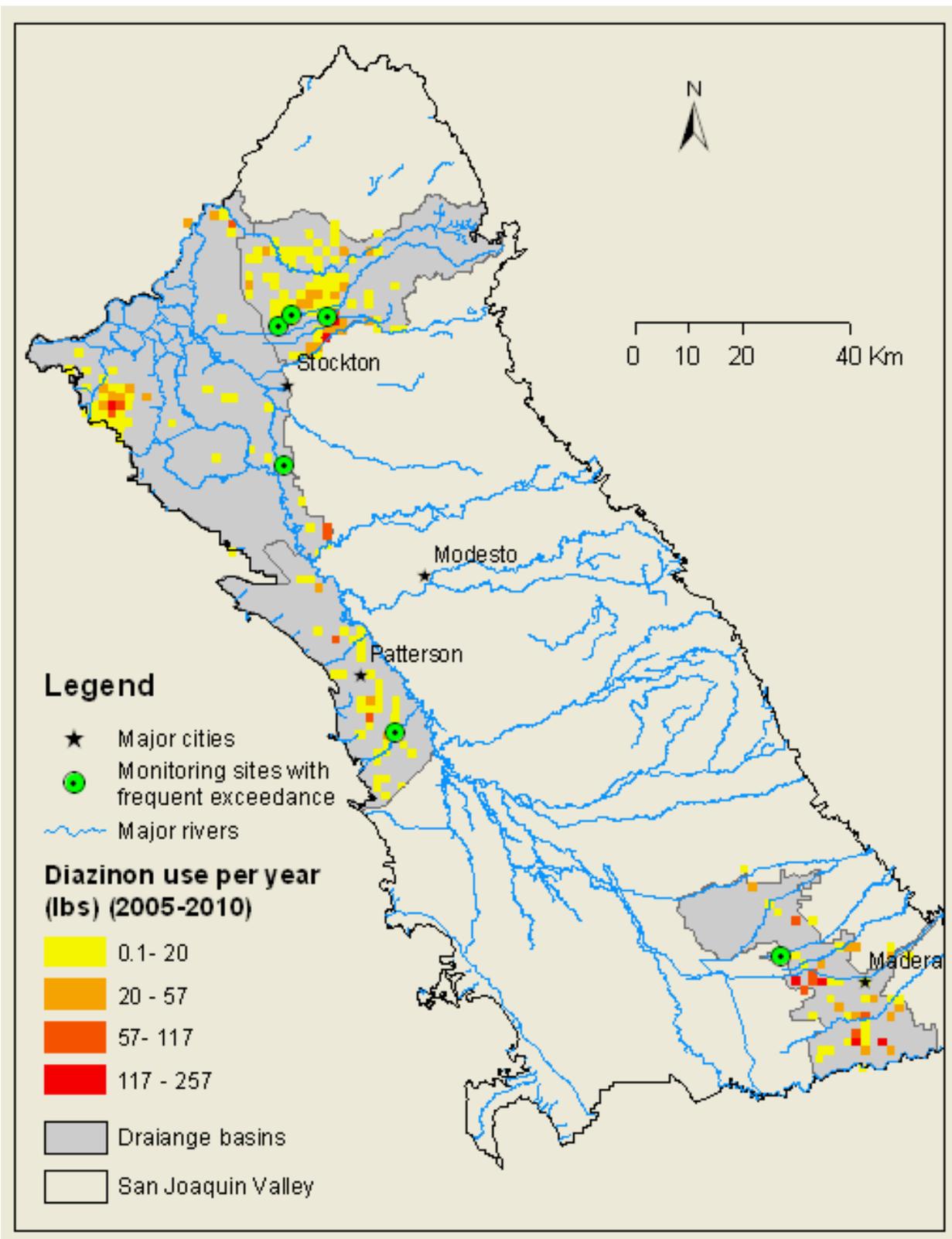


Fig. 6. San Joaquin Valley monitoring sites with most exceedances and diazinon use within their drainage basins.

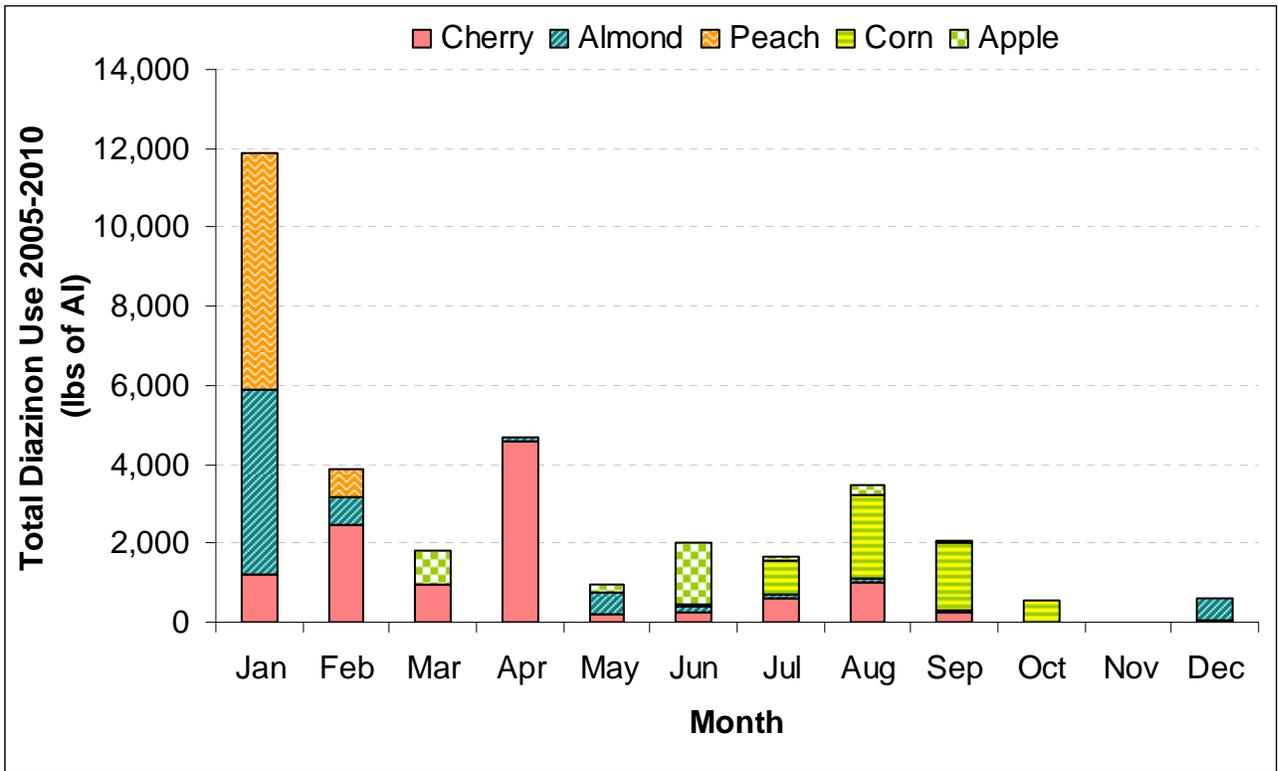


Fig. 7. Diazinon use on major crops in San Joaquin Valley Region 2005 -2010.

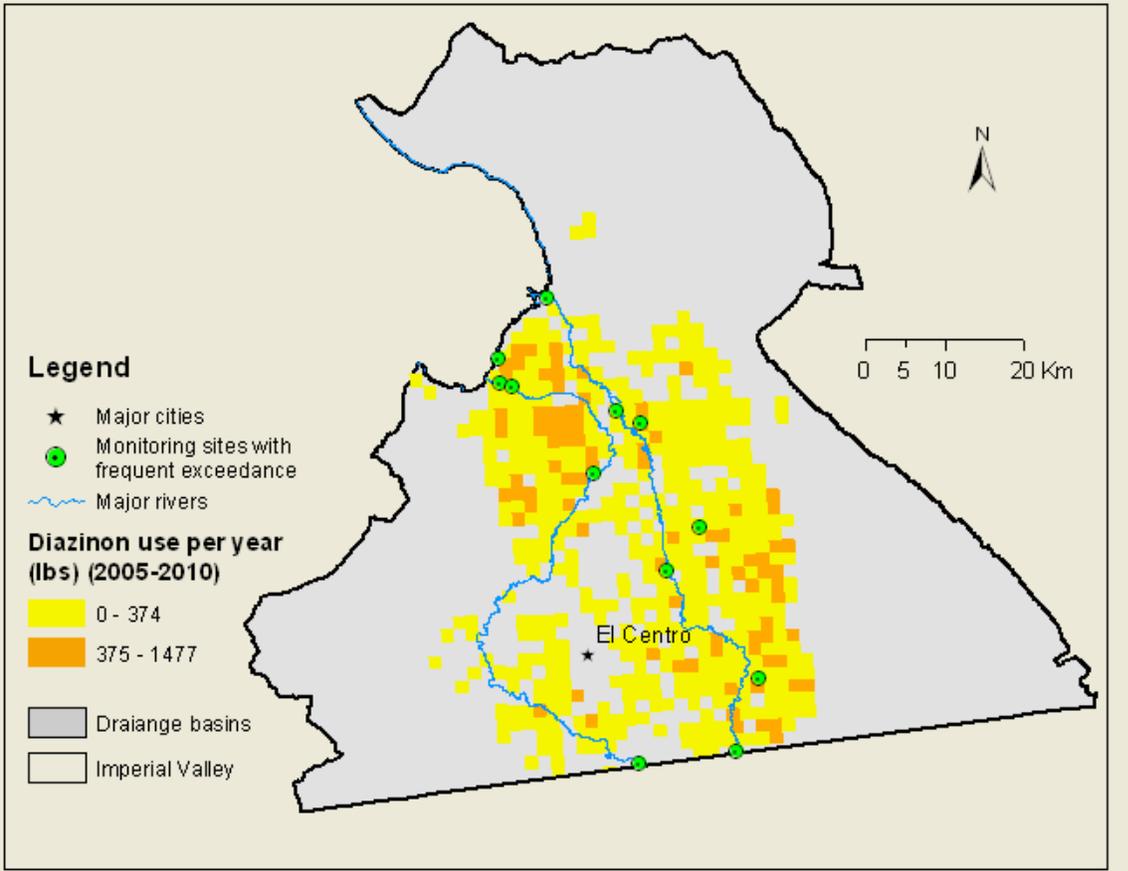


Fig. 8: Imperial Valley monitoring sites with most exceedances and diazinon use within their drainage basins.

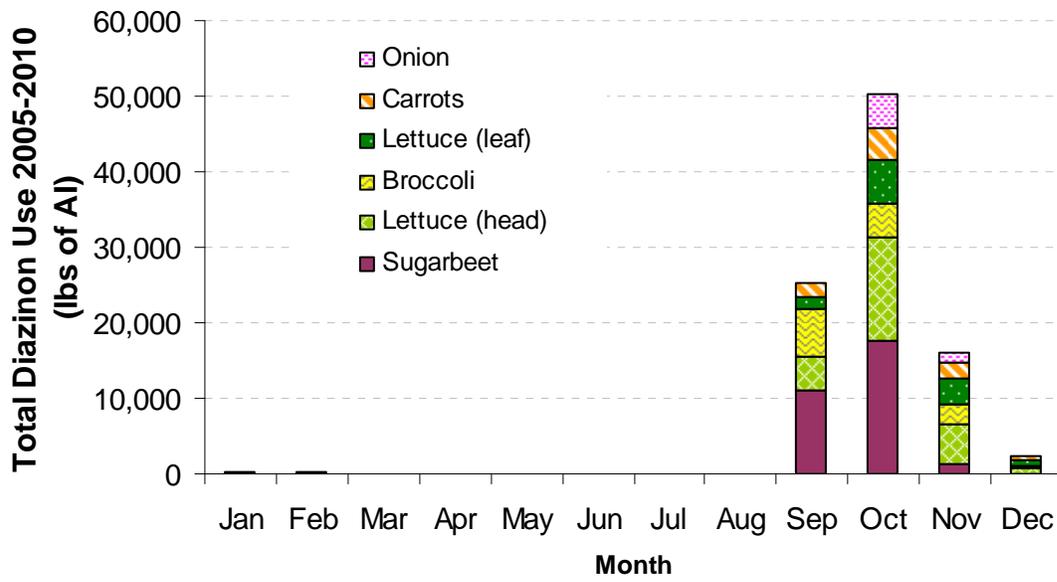


Fig. 9. Diazinon use on major crops in Imperial Valley Region 2005 -2010.

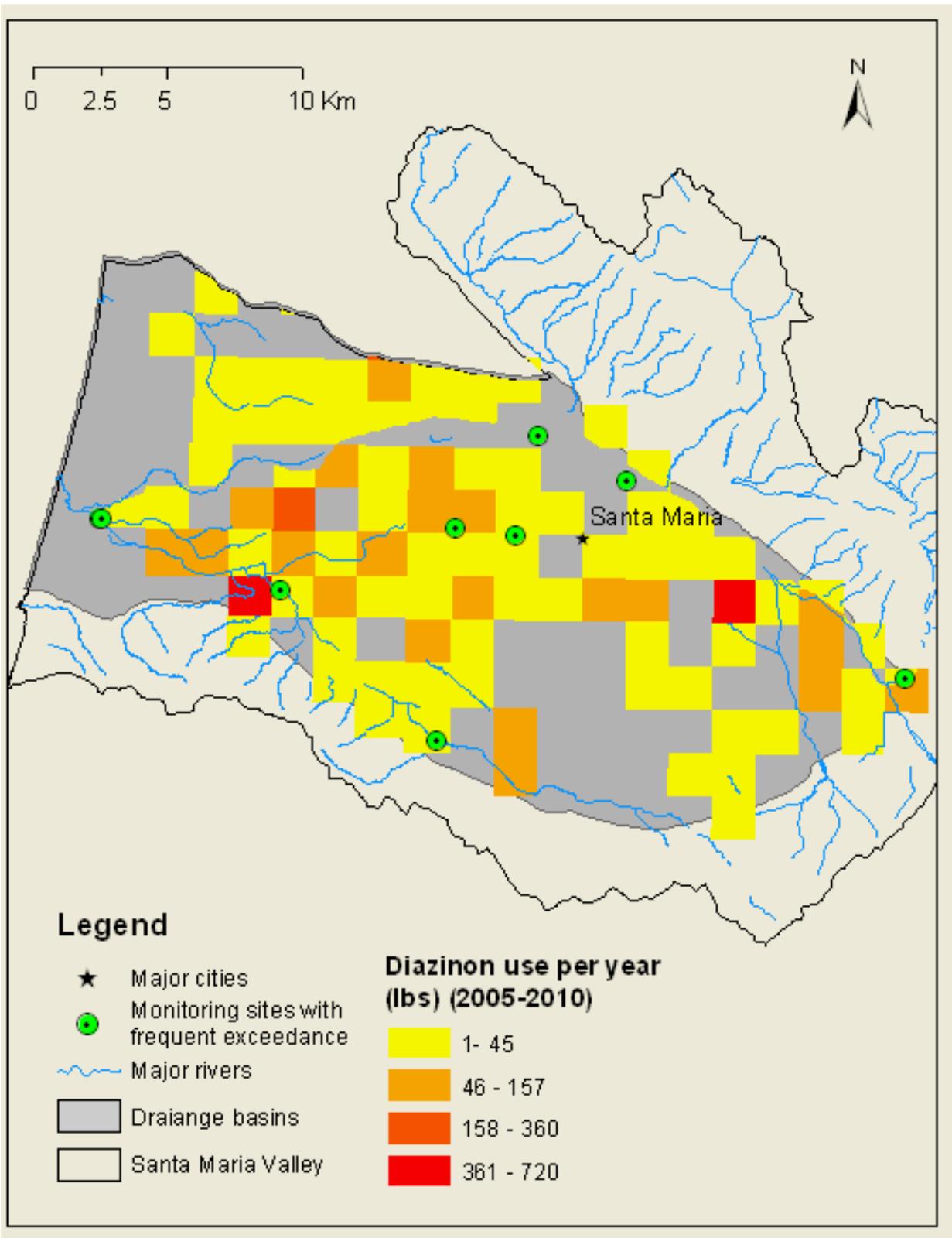


Fig. 10: Santa Maria Valley monitoring sites with most exceedances and diazinon use within their drainage basins.

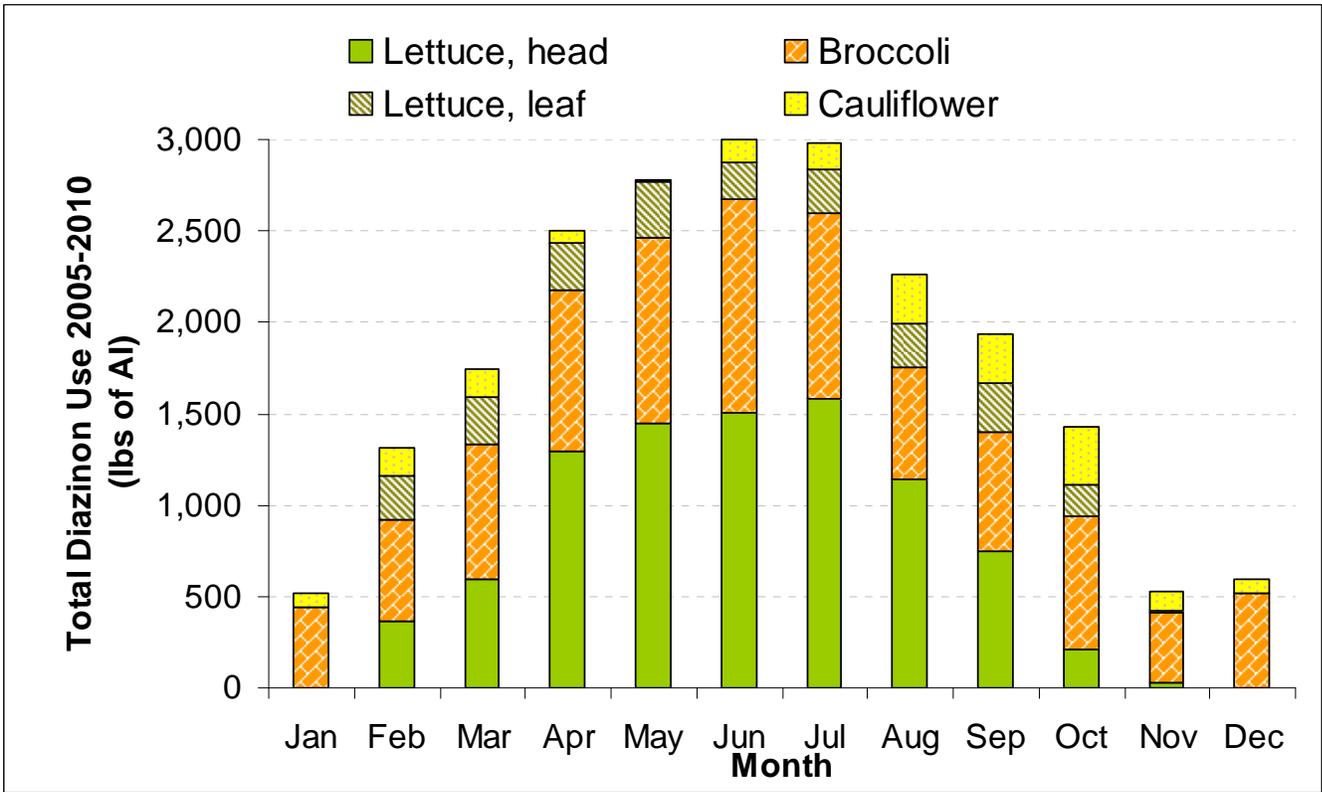


Fig. 11. Diazinon use on major crops in Santa Maria Valley Region 2005 -2010.