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**CFBF.com: Ag Alert: Commentary: Legislation results in expanding options for pest management**

## Commentary: Legislation results in expanding options for pest management

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By Mary-Ann Warmerdam

Thanks to a law enacted by Gov. Schwarzenegger, the Department of Pesticide Regulation's registration process is introducing new, more nature-friendly products that benefit both the environment and the farm community.

A new DPR report finds a 36 percent increase in new pesticide product registration and a 43 percent decrease in the time needed to process submissions in 2006, the first year since the governor signed Assembly Bill 1011. (Find the report online at [www.cdpr.ca.gov](http://www.cdpr.ca.gov))

Carried by former Assemblymember Barbara Matthews of Tracy, AB 1011 allowed the department to focus its limited resources on reviewing new pesticide products containing new active ingredients and major new uses not currently registered in California.

The law provided a new process under which brand name and generic pesticide manufacturers share product data without needless delay. As part of our commitment to improve registration, DPR also began accepting new submissions simultaneously with U. S. EPA.

Growers had been encouraging the creation of a more streamlined process. Support from officials of the California Farm Bureau Federation and California Seed Association lent additional credibility to our efforts.

When the governor signed the bill, DPR predicted it would bring new-generation pesticides to market more quickly, with the potential to lower costs for growers--helping them remain competitive in the world market--while benefiting California's environment with the introduction of new, less-toxic chemicals.

DPR's analysis verifies those expectations. In 2006, registration of new products with active ingredients already in use totaled 4,479--an increase of more than 300 from the previous year. Meanwhile, the time between submission and final action on these

products was cut by nearly two weeks.

In addition, the number of products containing new active ingredients also increased to 72 from 46, or an increase of 56 percent. At the same time, processing time for new chemicals dropped to 157 days from 271 days in 2005 (down 43 percent).

In other words, DPR handled more pesticide registrations and did it in less time.

That was possible because, under AB 1011, repetitive and time-consuming delays could be avoided. Registration staffers moved submissions through the system more quickly and efficiently, without compromising data needed to ensure health and safety concerns.

It's also worth noting that an informal review of submissions also suggests that the new system encourages the introduction of newer, less-toxic chemicals, microbials, biochemicals and substances categorized as "reduced risk" by U.S. EPA.

In 2005, DPR received submissions for eight such active ingredients and a total of 14 products. Under the new system in 2006, that rose to 12 active ingredients and 17 total products. So far in 2007, there have been 10 active ingredients and 12 products submitted. If this trend holds, it could signal real progress for agriculture and the environment.

Of course, we'll continue to track registration performance to ensure that we meet the needs of the regulated community. But it already seems clear that AB 1011 provides a win for doing business with the regulated community, a win for pesticide users who seek more choices in the marketplace, and a win for newer, better pest management and for our environment.

*(Mary-Ann Warmerdam is the director of the California Department of Pesticide Regulation. She may be contacted at [mwarmerdam@cdpr.ca.gov](mailto:mwarmerdam@cdpr.ca.gov).)*

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**California Farm Bureau Federation, 2300 River Plaza Drive, Sacramento, CA 95833**

Phone: (916) 561-5500, Fax: (916) 561-5695, General Information: [cfbf@cfbf.com](mailto:cfbf@cfbf.com)

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