

HERBICIDE REGISTRATION IN AUSTRALIA - DEFINITIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS, PAST AND POTENTIAL

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WHAT IS REGISTRATION? WHAT IS A LABEL?

Suitable definitions for today's complex economic, social, political, and technological climate are:

(1) 'Initial registration is the first end point of a research and development programme which makes obligatory a careful assessment of all facets of a candidate herbicide and its label by public health, agricultural, veterinary, and wild-life scientists and by administrators.'

(2) 'Re-registration provides for review and updating of the registered label, including additional uses, as new information becomes available.'

Registration requirements thus represent a checklist for research and development programmes.

(3) 'A registered label is a statement of guidelines necessary for fitting a herbicide into a weed management programme safely and effectively. It is a summary of the research and development programme.'

It seems realistic to accept these definitions when considering improvement in registration procedures.

IMPROVEMENTS IN REGISTRATION PROCEDURES SINCE 1965

These include:

(1) Establishment of the Pesticides Branch, Department of Primary Industry, Canberra, and appointment of the Technical Committee on Agricultural Chemicals. For terms of reference see Department of Primary Industry, Document PB 87. Submissions for clearance of new herbicides, or new uses for existing ones, are considered. The advantages of such a step include

(a) the definition for information required, (b) the obligatory assessment of all facets of candidate herbicides, while respecting constitutional prerogatives of the States, and (c) the provision of a forum for discussion and coordination of the activities of State and Commonwealth authorities.

- (2) Creation of a favourable climate for continuing liaison and communication between government and industry. Each group has maturely accepted its responsibilities.
- (3) The Victorian Pesticide Regulations (1966) introduced rational, obligatory requirements for statements of safety directions and first aid for inclusion on registered labels.
- (4) Other legislation:  
Tasmanian Pesticides Act (1968) and Regulations (1969);  
New South Wales Poisons Act (1966) and Regulations (1967);  
Queensland Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act (1966) and Regulations (1969); sundry aerial agricultural legislation.

#### FURTHER POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

Long term, a possible improvement is the progression of the single Federal authority concept. In the short term, the following would be fruitful:

##### (1) Specific Needs for Herbicides

Progress from the general requirements of PB 87 to a uniform code specifically providing broad, flexible guidelines for herbicide evaluation, labelling, clearance, and registration. This should be done on a cooperative basis between government and industry since the scope and direction of research and development programmes may be affected.

##### (2) Suggested Amendments of Legislation

The spirit of uniformity is hindered by limitations imposed by legislation; account should be taken of all agrochemicals. Uniformity is needed in (a) registration due dates, periods, application forms, and grounds for refusal to register; (b) re-registration procedures and frequency; (c) authority and grounds for de-registration; and (d) extension of label claims.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Considerable advances have been made both towards defining the requirements for herbicide registration and towards a more uniform approach to registration. A climate and spirit have been created which favour continuing improvement in this area;

we should support it by acting:

- (1) To provide a uniform code of broad, flexible guidelines specific to the evaluation, labelling, clearance, and registration of herbicides.
- (2) To amend legislation under which herbicides and all agrochemicals are registered so that uniformity becomes a practical reality.

The Australian Weeds Conference 1970 seems a logical forum to debate and initiate further action.

#### HERBICIDE REGISTRATION IN AUSTRALIA - COMPANY PROGRAMMES AND MECHANICAL ASPECTS

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#### INTRODUCTION

This paper is complementary to 'Herbicide Registration in Australia - Definitions and Improvements, Past and Potential', by B.B. Brett.

#### REGISTRATION AND COMPANY PROGRAMMES

A registered, labelled herbicide is the first climax of a research and development programme which involves a high degree of corporate planning, organization, coordination, and control on a continuing basis.

Few new herbicides reach the Australian market under 3 years of local evaluation and residue studies. They will have been 5-8 years (half the patent life) in development and have cost 3-6 million dollars.