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Note:

Anyone is free to use the information in this newsletter. Whenever possible, please give credit to the authors.

The use of trade names in this publication is solely for the purpose of providing information and does not necessarily constitute a recommendation of the product.

Feb. 6, 1985. Strawberry field day. 2-5 p.m. Dover AREC (Hillsborough Co.) Dover, FL.

Feb. 3-6, 1985. ASHS (So. Region) annual conference. Broadwater Beach and Hilton Hotels, Biloxi, Miss.

March 9, 1985. State teachers of vocational agriculture training session on FFA vegetable judging and identification contest, Gainesville.


II. PESTICIDE UPDATE

A. Alachlor (Lasso) Registration Removed From Potatoes and Aerial Application.

Alachlor (Lasso) is no longer labeled for use on potatoes. The aerial application of Lasso has also been cancelled from the label. Please make a note of these changes on the Weed Control Guide. Explanation of the cancellations can be found in the following section.

B. New Terms and Conditions for Continued Registration of Alachlor.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has placed additional terms and conditions on the continued registration of alachlor after determining that current use may result in risks to public health.

Alachlor (Lasso) by volume, is the largest herbicide used in the U.S. In summary of science findings, it was reported that alachlor is not acutely toxic by the oral, dermal, and inhalation routes of exposure and its uses are not expected to adversely affect avian and mammalian wildlife. Chronic dietary exposures in 18 month and two year studies using technical alachlor on rats and mice have shown dose related oncogenic effects at 15 mg/kg/day and larger rates. Due to these effects the EPA is requiring Monsanto to take a number of actions. The EPA will also subject alachlor to its Special Review process. The Special Review is a formal public process in which the EPA assesses all risks and benefits of a pesticide before reaching a final regulatory decision regarding its use.

As a result of these findings and discussions between Monsanto and EPA, Monsanto is required to provide all potential applicators with the opportunity to attend a special training program which outlines the safeguards to be observed in handling this product.
I. NOTES OF INTEREST

A. Personnel

1. Dr. Donald N. Maynard has requested that he be reassigned from his position as Chairman of the Vegetable Crops Department to a full-time professor in the department, effective December 3, 1984. Dr. Daniel J. Cantliffe is serving as Acting Department Chairman.

2. Dr. Christine Chase will join the Vegetable Crops Department, Position 93558, as a full-time research/teaching faculty member in the area of molecular genetics. She will start March 1, 1985.

B. New Publications

1. Staked Tomato Variety Trial Results - Spring 1984, IMM 84-5 by P. H. Everett and K. A. Armbrester is available from Immokalee AREC, Rt. 1, Box 26, Immokalee, FL 33934.

2. Florida Cooperative Extension Service Circular 570, "Herbs in the Florida Garden," has just been printed for the first time. Distribution is through any county extension office in Florida.

3. Bob Dunn has announced that the Nematode Control Guide (NCG) is now available on-line through FAIRS. This will be the official, most current IFAS recommendations and information about managing nematode pests of plants. Bob says printed versions will continue periodically, but will represent the current state of the NCG on FAIRS. Changes might occur on the electronic database between printings, so a warning to that effect will appear on publications.

4. Voluntiller - The initial issue of a newsletter written for Florida Master Gardeners has just been mailed (December, 1984). It is bi-monthly, so the second issue (Jan-Feb) will go out in February. Since it is an in-house newsletter directed toward the communication needs of Florida master gardeners, the mailing list will be restricted to this group. However, anyone working with similar groups and who wants a copy to review should contact this department.

5. Cir. 399-A, "Diagnosis and Control of Plant Diseases and Nematodes in a Home Vegetable Garden," by Tom Kucharek and Bob Dunn, has just been released. As usual, copies are available from county extension offices, and IFAS publications, Bldg. 664, University of Florida, Gainesville.

C. Vegetable Crops Calendar


Jan. 29-31, 1985. Commercial vegetable inservice training for
Preliminary program
Vegetable Crops In-Service Training (Commercial)

January 28 - Travel Homestead
January 29 - 8:00 a.m. - Registration - Dade Co. Agricultural Ext. Auditorium, 18710 SW 288 St., Homestead

8:15 - Introduction to training.
     8:30-12:00 - Tour
     1:30- 5:00 - Harvesting and handling techniques to control postharvest losses due to pests.
                - Pesticide application and sprayer calibrations.
                - Use of backpack sprayers for plot demonstration
                - Nozzles and nozzle arrangement for optimum coverage
                - Hands on use of backpack sprayers.
                - Experience in calibration of field sprayer.
                - Demonstration in nozzle coverages.

7:00 - Bar B.Q. and Get together.

January 30 -

8:00-12:00 - Identification techniques of major insects and diseases of tomatoes, snap beans and strawberries.

- Integrated Pest Management Principles
  - Determination of number of samples
  - Determination of sample size
  - Establishment of action thresholds
  - Interactions of beneficial/pest problems
- IPM and the Scouting business
  - Sampling and threshold of insect pests of Crucifers.
  - Threshold establishment and defoliation experiments.
  - Panel discussion of recommended pesticides in an IPM approach.

12:00-1:30 - Chili Lunch at Tropical Research and Education Center - Homestead.

1:30-5:00 - Tour
- Tour includes individual scouting experience in
New label requirements for alachlor products include:
- a tumor hazard warning statement that alachlor products cause tumors in laboratory animals;
- a water contamination warning statement that alachlor has been identified in limited ground-water sampling, possibly will leach into ground water, and may reach surface waters as a result of runoff;
- a protective clothing requirement that goggles, rubber gloves and boots, long trousers, and long-sleeved shirts be worn during mixing, loading operations and during cleaning and repair;
- cancellation of aerial application;
- handling instructions to reduce applicator exposure.

Monsanto has also voluntarily removed the use of alachlor on potatoes.

Alachlor is registered for use as a reemergence herbicide on corn (all types), soybeans, peanuts, dry beans, lima beans, red kidney beans, mungbeans, grain sorghum, sunflower, peas, cotton and certain ornamentals.

James V. Parochetti, USDA Extension Service Program Leader -- Pesticides, Applicator Training and Weed Science has provided to me the following information:

County Agents needing a copy of these three documents may call me or the IFAS Pesticide Information Office.

Monsanto representatives have also contacted me on this issue and they will start the special training sessions in Florida as soon as EPA has determined if the training program provisions are adequate.

(Stall - Veg. 12-84)

III. COMMERCIAL VEGETABLES

A. Vegetable Crops In-Service Training (Commercial)

The vegetable crops in-service training for county extension faculty will be held January 29-31, 1985 in Homestead. This year's emphasis will be on Integrated Pest Management. Two half day tours will be held to view the vegetable production on the unique rock and marl soils in the county. Hands on training in large plot sprayers and scouting procedures will be included in the program.

Travel authorizations will be sent to those of you who are already registered for the program. This is the busy season in Homestead. Make your motel reservations as soon as possible.

A preliminary program for the training follows:
B. Application intervals for garden pesticides - a word of caution.

IFAS plant pathologist Dr. Gary Simone has issued a word of caution for those of us who direct home gardeners in the use of approved fungicides. Through the years it has been customary for extension service publications to advise growers and gardeners to "apply fungicides on a preventive basis at weekly intervals", and to "reduce the interval under severe infection conditions."

According to Gary, it is illegal for a grower (commercial or home gardener) to reduce the interval below that which is on the label. Therefore, for example, if fungicide A has a label that says "apply every 7 days on beans for rust control." fungicide A may not be applied legally at an interval of less than 7 days.

Of course, some fungicides have a label application interval shorter than 7 days for some diseases on some vegetables (example: chlorothalonil at 3-5 days for early blight on celery). therefore, there are instances where the grower can legally shorten the spray interval where the label allows. we must try to include precautionary statements where possible, such as "read and follow the label for specific usages," or "shorter intervals not allowed in all cases."

(Stephens - Veg. 84-12)
IV. VEGETABLE GARDENING

A. Inexpensive pH Estimator Strips

During the 1984 annual meeting of the ASHS in Vancouver, B.C., a poster presentation reported on a study to determine the accuracy and reliability of paper pH strips. The poster was presented by Hipp, Giordano, and Connor of Texas A&M, and reported in California Extension's Help Notes.

Soil pH is an important factor in proper growth of plants, including vegetables. Gardeners are advised to get their garden soil tested every two or three years so that proper adjustments may be made to increase the productivity of the soil. Testing for pH is best conducted by the University of Florida's Extension Service for a very minimal charge. However, several devices generally referred to as pH meters are offered for sale to home gardeners for easy do-it-yourself checking.

The pH determination devices are usually in one of three forms: (a) soil testing kits which involves the use of chemicals reagents and colorimetric charts, (b) battery operated probes for inserting into the soil and reading the pH from a dial, and (c) paper strips which react to the pH of the soil.

The soil test kits have been around a long time and offer fairly reliable results if the procedure is conducted properly. However, there is room for human error throughout the process, the chemicals get old, and most gardeners are reluctant to use them.

The electrical battery operated devices are simple to use and many give reasonable accurate determinations for "ball-park" calculations (.5 pH unit readings).

The third method, involving paper strips costing about six cents each, was evaluated at Texas A&M, as already mentioned. In the study, thirteen different media mixes were placed in pots and irrigated for 30 days before pH was measured. The colorpHast paper pH strips, which measure pH between 4.0 and 7.0, were dipped in a paste of each of the mixes for intervals of 1, 3, 4, and 6 minutes. Estimates of pH were read to the nearest 0.5 pH unit. Samples of each media mix were also tested with the pH electrode method most often used in laboratory testing.

The investigators concluded that the pH strips are acceptable if high accuracy is not required, and that the strips have a sensitivity of about 0.3 pH units. If using the strips, best results will be obtained by immersing the strips in the media paste for a minimum of six minutes.

(Stephens - Veg. 84-12)