

News

Penn. reports on pythium blight

Forrest W. Nutter, Jr., Herb Cole, Jr., and Patricia Sanders reported on the pythium blight situation in Pennsylvania recently in an article in "The Keynote", published by the Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council, Inc. The three concluded from a survey of superintendents in that state that only five percent apply preventive fungicides on fairways. While 35 percent apply preventive fungicides on greens and tees, almost 40 percent rated pythium blight to be a moderate to severe problem on their courses. Nutter, Cole and Sanders concluded that the majority of superintendents apply fungicide on a curative basis.

Four golf courses in Pennsylvania were selected for an experiment to monitor the microclimate of three locations within each course to determine if there are differences in the microclimates within a golf course and if these differences are related to pythium blight appearance and are reliable in forecasting disease with sufficient warning to apply preventive control measures that are cost-effective.

Moisture, measured in the form of relative humidity, was found to be the factor which determined where pythium did or did not occur. Relative humidity greater than, or equal to 90 percent lasted three to four hours longer in low areas where pythium often occurred, compared to the moderately-elevated areas where pythium sometimes or rarely occurred.

Maximum daily temperature and the number of hours that relative humidity was equal to or greater than 90 percent with temperatures equal to or greater than 68 degrees F. were found to be correlated with pythium outbreaks. These factors were found to be accurate in predicting pythium outbreaks during the 1979 growing season.

A hygrothermograph, which monitors temperature and relative humidity, and placed in the lowest-most pythium prone - area of the course would indicate when conditions required treating pythium-prone areas before the disease strikes. Such

environmental data can be used in conjunction with application of herbicides, insecticides, irrigation or syringing.

Silvex final hearing to begin January 22

Focusing on 2,4,5-T, Silvex "risks" followed by "benefits" evidence, the EPA will begin cancellation proceedings on January 22, 1980. Dow, and others, have lawyers challenging the proposed cancellation of certain uses.

The Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP) filed a draft report in September that recommended that EPA not hold a FIFRA Section 6(b)(2) hearing on use of the pesticides on rice, rangeland, orchards, sugar cane and certain non-crop uses because the Panel found "no evidence of an immediate or substantial hazard to human health or the environment" from these uses. In an appendix to the draft report, SAP said the potential for significant reproductive and teratogenic (developmental malformation) risk to persons living in the immediate area of 2,4,5-T spraying operations "does not appear to be substantial except as they may be directly exposed on a chronic basis.

These conclusions were in agreement with those of the American Farm Bureau Federation's (AFBF) "dispute resolution conference" on 2,4,5-T. Among their findings were that the miscarriages reported in the Alsea study were not demonstrated to result from the spraying of the forest with 2,4,5-T.

Whether the EPA will agree with these reports will not be known until after the cancellation proceedings.

DBCP turf uses suspended by EPA

All uses of dibromochloropropane (DBCP) on commercial and residential turf and ornamentals have been suspended by Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Douglas Costle as of October 29. Other suspended uses included many fruits and vegetables, but exempted the Hawaiian pineapple uses.

While Dow, Occidental and Shell have already discontinued their products, the Gowan Co. and Quimica Organica De Mexico

maintained that their DBCP products were not the same. The registrants will have 30 days to request a hearing on the cancellation actions.

Costle did say, in his final decision, that he did not assume "that it will be impossible to develop terms and conditions of registration which will adequately reduce the potential for exposure to DBCP to levels that will not cause unreasonable adverse effects to man and the environment."

OSHA may try employers for death

If an employer willfully violates a specific OSHA standard and a worker dies as a result of the violation, OSHA may recommend the case for criminal prosecution. Generally, civil willful citations will be issued also in order to establish the employer's requirement to abate the hazard. Civil citations will be sent to a firm when the case is referred to the Justice Department for possible criminal prosecution, when the decision not to refer the case is made or when the expiration of the six-month statute of limitations for issuing citations is approaching, whichever comes first. This is according to expanded instructions that OSHA issued to compliance safety and health officers providing for handling investigations of possible criminal violations of OSHA standards and was effective October 9, 1979.

The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 provides in Section 17(e) that "Any employer who willfully violates any standard rule, or order promulgated pursuant to section 6 of this Act, or any regulations prescribed pursuant to this Act, and that violation caused death to any employee, shall upon conviction, be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000 or by imprisonment for not more than six months or by both." Second convictions carry double maximum punishments.

OSHA to reduce fatality report time

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has announced a proposal that would reduce from 48 hours to eight hours the time within which an employer must inform the agency of any workplace accident that

causes a fatality or requires the hospitalization of five or more workers.

The proposal would also require that any deaths resulting within six months from a job accident be reported to OSHA within eight hours of the time the employer becomes aware of the death.

Assistant Secretary Eula Bingham, head of the Labor Department's OSHA, explained that hazardous conditions that might have contributed to an accident may be evident at the worksite only temporarily. Working conditions can change, key projects may be completed, and witnesses' recollections may fade while a report mailed two days after an accident is being delivered to OSHA, she pointed out. An accident report within the proposed eight hour limit is more likely to permit the collection of the most accurate and useful inspection information.

Dr. Bingham emphasized that the proposal would impose no new paperwork on employers. In fact, notification paperwork could be eliminated entirely since the proposal provides for the creation of a national toll-free telephone number for employers to report accidents during night hours, weekends, and holidays. The contents of the accident reports would also be unchanged.

Of significance is the fact that OSHA is also considering whether accident inspections would be improved if the worksite were kept intact, or "frozen", to preserve pertinent evidence. This issue, however, will be decided in a subsequent rulemaking.

New fungicide registered by EPA

Duosan, Mallinckrodt's new broad spectrum turf fungicide has been registered by EPA. The wettable powder, systemic-contact fungicide is 15 percent thiophanate-methyl and 60 percent zinc ion and manganese ethylenebis dithiocarbamate.

The label covers uses on turf for control of dollar spot, brown patch, copper spot, red thread, helminthosporium leaf spots, fusarium patch and crown rusts. Application rates differ for each disease, but range from 3 oz./M to 6 oz./M.

The label also carries a WARNING designation of moderately toxic. The compound is toxic to fish.