

Generic Chemistry – The Other Side Of The Coin

Over the past few years, much attention has been drawn to the debate concerning patented chemistry versus generic chemistry. In the September/October 2006 issue of "Turfgrass Matters", an article was published, "What Brand Name Means For The Turf Industry". To give the other side of the argument, I have contacted those who actually produce and market generic chemistry to the industry.

Bob Yarborough, T&O Business Manager for Advan, LLC., had this to say about the generic debate. "Patents protect for a return on investment to develop new chemistry. The EPA protects by setting legal standards and regulations everyone must meet, but once protected data ages to time limits set by the EPA, a generic company can ask to cite this data with an 'Offer To Pay'. It's not free. The generic producer pays the basic registrant his money, then can meet the same standards as the basic to get an EPA approved label, and sell it. Offering an alternative is what it's all about. Look at the prescription drug industry, same thing. Freedom of choice at work! You decide". Additional information on Advan can be found at www.advanllc.com, or by calling 800-250-5024.

Etigra™ Chief Operating Officer, Randy Canady, had a few points to make concerning this issue. "Superintendents today have the option of a post-patent alternative for the majority of the products most often used on a course. As patents face expiration, post-patent experts begin the process of determining the chemical composition of an active ingredient and developing an equivalent formation of the branded version. To be registered, they must meet the regulatory standard established under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), to qualify as a generic product, i.e., that our version is 'substantially similar or identical' to the branded version. This regulatory protection from the EPA ensures that the generic product is at least comparable to the branded version. In addition, often there have been significant advances in active ingredient synthesis and formulation and production technologies since the branded product was first launched. These advances can lead to a post-patent product with fewer impurities, an improved formulation and a more efficient manufacturing process than the branded alternative". Additional information on Etigra can be found at www.etigra.com, or by calling 877-637-6728.

"Remember that generic pesticides operate under the same laws and regulations as pharmaceuticals in the U.S.", states Russ Mitchell, Product Director for Quali-Pro. "They must be 'substantially similar', meaning the active ingredient has to be exactly the same. The only difference can be in the inerts which are the emulsifiers, surfactants, stability agents, the micron size of the active ingredient, in other words the formulation". When it comes to customer service and support, Russ sums the issue up rather well for Quali-Pro, Advan, and Etigra. "We do have reps in the field that will come to your location along with our distributor partner sales representatives. We stand behind all our products just like the original manufacturers do. We guarantee our product will do what the label says it will do. We also support the major organizations in the turf industry and advertise in most of the national magazines. We are here for the long term". Additional information on Quali-Pro can be found at www.quali-pro.com, or by calling 800-979-8994.

In conclusion, we live in the United States of America, which grants us certain privileges, primarily, freedom of choice. Concerning generic chemistry, the research is available, the registrations are in place, the technical support is in the market and the association support is being demonstrated throughout the industry. These are the facts that I have personally experienced. You have a choice, which is what it's all about. It is up to you to decide whether or not to exercise that choice. That's what being an American is all about!

Joe Herkalo