New SA Chemical use legislation- ‘off label use’ regulations more grower friendly

The initial proposed changes to chemical legislation in South Australia meant that growers would have to have used chemicals exactly as per label instructions – with all off-label use no longer accepted. Clearly this was unacceptable to an industry which promotes sustainable farming, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and IPM programmes.

The amendments to the originally proposed legislation is a result of much work on behalf of the South Australian growers by Mike Redmond (Virginia Horticulture Centre) Danny Deleso (Bunchline Growers of SA), Jim Kelly (SAFF), John Mundy (SAFF Horticulture Chair), Robyn Palmer (Palmer Produce Management), Angelo Demasi (APML), Domenic Cavallaro (Cavallaro Horticultural Services) and Craig Feutrill (SA Vegetable IDO) together with John Kassebaum from the Rural Chemicals Policy section of PIRSA.

In many cases, minor chemical uses and delayed permits through the system meant that many growers would have had problems producing crops. The regulation as indicated below allows an alternative – growers can now either obtain a permit for minor chemical use or follow the amended regulation.

The new South Australian legislation for Minor Horticultural Crops involves any crop other than grapes, citrus, pomes, potatoes and onions and has come into place as from the end of August 2004.

Principal components of the changes are:

- Nomination (of the chemical) by individual grower or grower organisation (such as Virginia Horticulture Centre or SAFF)
- Nominate the crop
- Justification by including information on current chemical use. NB: The exemption is not limited to nominated chemicals only and the justification is not required to be a comprehensive listing of all use possibilities.
- Nominations will be gazetted on submission. This will allow the past ability to use chemicals without the need for an APVMA permit to continue.
- Nomination must include identification of the current QA scheme in which the applicant participates, Freshcare or equivalent. Industry group submissions may list more than one scheme.
- Exemption conditional on annual chemical residue testing of each different crop.
• Listing of a crop/QA scheme by an individual will automatically include all growers of that crop in the same QA scheme.

As the program is in the early stages, initially for an application by an individual, the chemical information could be drawn from spray records required to be kept as part of the grower’s QA compliance.
The scheme will be managed by an organisation such as the Virginia Horticulture Centre and protocols for participation are currently being developed.

For more information contact Craig Feutrill, SAVIDO on 0418 831 809 or Mike Redmond VHC on 08 8282 9200.

National Diamondback Moth Speakers Tour a Success

Photo 1; DSCN2197.jpg - CAPTION; Stephen Ng (Golden Harvest Farm Supplies) (at left) with Associate Professor Tong-Xian Liu (L) from Texas A&M University in the USA at a Brassica Pest and Disease Management Workshop in Sydney for the Chinese growing community.

Photo 2; KevinRonDJ.jpg – CAPTION; Qld grower Kevin Niemeyer left, with IPM Adoption Coordinator Dijana Jevremov and Professor Ron Mau from the University of Hawaii jointly presented to WA audiences.
A team of outstanding international speakers has been touring for the National Diamondback moth (DBM) project. Brisbane recently hosted the International Congress of Entomology where the world leaders in insect knowledge and management gathered to learn from each other.

IPM Adoption Coordinator with the DBM project, Dijana Jevremov said it was very fortunate to have the Congress in Australia and to be able to capture some of the leading Brassica insect specialists as presenters, one of which was a keynote speaker at the Congress. I have heard lots of praise and appreciative comments from those growers and consultants that have attended these tour workshops. Praise for the invited speaker, and also for the opportunity to view the new electronic monitoring tool of the project.

Each State was treated to a different program. Professor and Director LIU, Shu-sheng of the Institute of Applied Entomology in China spoke to audiences in Victoria, NSW and Queensland. He has been participating in Brassica IPM activities in a collaborative project in the Lockyer Valley of Queensland for some time and has wide experience in evaluation of natural beneficials, action thresholds for decision-making and the development of practical IPM programs and implementation.

Professor Tong Xian Liu is Associate Professor of Entomology at Texas A&M University, USA who produced bi-lingual slides for his talk to around 40 Chinese growers of the Sydney basin area. A passionate speaker about IPM he spoke about vegetable IPM programs in Texas including DBM and other crucifer pests.

All the speakers had intimate knowledge about the Australian situation with DBM control but none more than Professor Ronald Mau from the University of Hawaii at Manoa island. He captured the attention of WA and SA audiences with his story of widespread resistance development to the insecticide ‘Spinosad’ within 2.5 years of its release in Hawaii. Professor Mau said that he used the Australian DBM insecticide resistance management strategy developed in the project, to devise his own program to tackle the alarming resistance problem.

Grower Kevin Niemeyer of the Lockyer Valley in Queensland was invited to speak with Professor Mau in WA to relay his experience of insecticide resistance development. This gave further weight to the need to follow a statewide strategy where ideally all growers are rotating products according to window periods in the year where only certain products are used and others are not, so that insects are not able to readily develop resistance.

Tasmania will have workshops later in the year with a speaker from New Zealand. In each State, audiences were introduced to the insecticide toxicity chart, DBM development calculator, and the new electronic monitoring guide. The responses have been very positive. Growers and consultants have stated that they will begin to use these products.
DBM Monitoring Guide Apology

The Diamondback moth project team wishes to apologise to readers who have accessed the new electronic monitoring tool from the internet and found it distorted. Readers who have Windows 98 or earlier as their computer operating system, will have experienced problems with the way the Guide looks. We are currently rectifying this and making other improvements and additions to the site so please revisit again soon. Note that you will need to have Excel as a program loaded in order for the full Monitoring Guide to work.

The address is www.dpi.vic.gov.au follow the links: Agriculture & food, then Plant Diseases and Pests. Once you have accessed the site you can save the file to your desktop or as a regular file so you don't have to go to the internet each time to use it.

Readers may have read about these new items in the ‘Brassica IPM National Newsletter’. Issue 5 will soon be posted to all Brassica growers and their consultants. Anyone wishing to go on the mailing list can contact the State Vegetable IDO, Craig Feutrill on 0418 831 089 or via email on cfeutrill@arris.com.au. Further information is available from Dijana on 08 8303 9672.

VegLink in October and not September?

Photo 3; LakeDal Srinigar.jpg – CAPTION; Vegetables for sale from the shikaras on Lake Dal in Srinigar, northern India.

You may be wondering why the South Australian VegLink column is a month late. The Vegetable IDO took a short break to investigate the floating markets of Srinagar in Northern India as part of a tour of the Himalayas. These markets run 365 days of the year from 5am to about 6.30am on Lake Dal, and hundreds of Shikaras (boats) full of vegetables of an astounding variety are being bought and sold each day.
South Australian Vegetable Strategic Plan Pathway 2004 -2009

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The development of the South Australian Vegetable Industry Strategic plan is in its final draft and will be released to industry in the very near future. The goals and objectives of the plan are detailed below. The State plan also has an operational plan and timetable to achieve the outcomes as listed. The previous plan ended in 2000 and PIRSA, SAFF, many grower representatives and the Vegetable IDO in consultation with industry through a series of workshops have delivered for the first time a plan with pathways and timeframes to achieve industry needs.

INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP

1. DEVELOP A STRONG, UNITED, REPRESENTATIVE POLITICAL VOICE FOR THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN VEGETABLE INDUSTRY / GROWERS.
   • Establish an effective peak industry body for South Australian vegetable growers by June 2005.

2. ENSURE THE INDUSTRY GETS BETTER VALUE FROM EXISTING LEVIES COLLECTED.
   • Improve communication to levy payers about where the levy money is being spent.
   • Negotiate to retain some of the levy collected in SA for South Australian activities.
   • Extend the levy to all vegetables and areas to fund more research and development.

BIOSECURITY

3. HAVE A PROCESS IN PLACE THAT CAN EFFECTIVELY RESPOND TO BIOSECURITY THREATS TO THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN VEGETABLE INDUSTRY
   • Establish effective links to the national biosecurity plan.
   • Promote good on farm and regional hygiene practices as a preventative measure
   • Adoption of effective integrated pest management programs that benefit the whole state.

PRODUCTION

4. CONTINUE TO REFINE OUR ABILITY TO PRODUCE QUALITY, SAFE PRODUCE THAT MEETS CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS.
   • Sustainable management of South Australian land and water resources.
   • Implementation of an integrated quality assurance program that is acceptable to and recognized by all growers and the entire supply chain.
   • Sustainable and responsible chemical legislation and use.
   • Seek an equitable share of the profit by improving competition with in the market.
   • Enhancement of value adding opportunities with in the South Australian vegetable industry.
**PEOPLE**

5. ENSURE AN ONGOING SUPPLY OF WELL TRAINED AND HIGHLY SKILLED PEOPLE IN ALL FACETS OF THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN VEGETABLE INDUSTRY.
   - Development and implementation of a multi-tiered and nationally recognized training program tailored to the needs of the vegetable industry by 2005.
   - Promote and establish industry career paths.
   - Establish a coordinated program to overcome the problem of seasonal labour availability.
   - Develop and promote effective channels for communication between all levels of the South Australian vegetable industry.

**MARKETS**

6. INCREASE THE MARKET SHARE AND PROFITABILITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIAN VEGETABLES.
   - Implementation of more equitable and transparent supply chains that facilitate a fair deal for all growers.
   - Develop a 5 year marketing strategy to promote the benefits of fruit and vegetables (link to national vital vegetables).
   - Assist industry to implement strategies to develop new markets and opportunities

For more information or a copy of the plan please contact Craig Feutrill, SA Vegetable IDO on 0418 831 089, Office 08 8303 6714 or email cfeutrill@arris.com.au

**State Vegetable Industry Development Officers Visit Farms in Victoria**

Photo 4; lamsbroc.jpg - CAPTION; Young broccoli grown at the Boneo property also not hedgerows surrounding the area.

Photo 5; lamsshed.jpg – CAPTION; Inside the Lamattina packing facility – packing parsnips and celery.
Following the National AUSVEG R&D meetings (latest held in Melbourne 6th and 7th of September), the six Vegetable IDOs like to get into the production regions and meet growers to ‘kick the dirt’ and better understand the needs and issues of the state they are visiting.

Patrick Ulloa, the Victorian Vegetable IDO kindly organised a tour of the Mornington Peninsular with an extended visit to A&G Lamattina & Sons at Boneo, 100 kms south of Melbourne.

Russell Lamattina graciously hosted us on a tour of his property at Boneo and gave us great insight to the philosophy and commitment of this farming family.

Angelo and Guiseppina, Russell’s parents established the farm in 1955 and over the years it has grown to approximately 11,000 acres with 1,000 at Boneo and 10,000 at Happy Valley in Robinvale where the majority of the carrots are grown.

Crops grown include cabbage, cauliflower, iceberg and Cos lettuce, carrots, celery, parsnips and broccoli. The crops are grown in sandy soil (100 feet deep over rock) and the efforts that go into soil preparation, bed formation, irrigation and crop management show dividends in the packing.
shed. All the properties have excellent, well prepared and maintained soil ensuring the highest quality vegetables possible for the Lamattina crops. An agronomist is used to monitor all crops and ensure that the soil is carefully rotated, conditioned, and nourished. A total of nearly 100 years of knowledge, skills and experience is called upon throughout the growing seasons to ensure good growing soil. The Lamattina family is a major supplier to the Woolworths chain, and has been for 40 years illustrating the commitment to quality from both companies.

The attention to detail on the property and in the packing shed was very impressive with as an example, all tractors and implements being cleaned and greased prior to being put in the shed for the night, hedgerow windbreaks around all of the production areas, wide headlands and not a weed to be seen! In the packing shed there is a sign that states ‘If you wouldn’t buy it – don’t pack it’. The majority of the produce is packed into Chep 42 litre returnable crates and cool-chain protocols are fastidiously maintained.

A publication about the company states ‘A & G Lamattina and Sons has long recognised the importance of supplying a product that meets the requirements of the export markets. It is running and developing an enterprise with vision and clear goals. Technologies will be adopted that will help improve both products and services. The development of A & G Lamattina and Sons is based on the use of the best available technology, age-old know-how, and hard work. It is operated with a personal and moral commitment that only exists in a well managed family business.’

The Vegetable IDOs would like to thank Russell for his time and allowing us to visit A&G Lamattina & Sons. All of the IDOs felt we were being shown around a world class farming company by a man with a passion for producing world class vegetables.

**Next series of VEGEnotes R&D papers sent**

Photo 9: Vegenotes_folder.jpg – CAPTION; The VEGEnote series has expanded with a post out of a further 6 papers.

The second round of the VEGEnotes series has recently been sent to over 6500 growers nationally. The Horticulture Australia/National Vegetable levy funded VEGEnotes project (VG02116) aims to value add to the national R&D process communicating the outputs of other levy-funded projects to growers nationally.

Six editions were distributed with the intention that the growers would add them to the seven editions that were sent in the VEGEnotes Folder earlier this year.

The titles of the current six editions are:

- Irrigating Vegetable Crops with Recycled Water (Soil and Water)
- Lettuce Aphid Threat (Pest and Disease)
- The National Vegetable Levy (General Industry)
- Utilising Computers to Enhance Farm Business (Farm Management)
- Quality Washwater (Post Harvest)
- Irrigation Management (Soil and Water)
This series covered a broad range of topics, which give growers access to the latest information which may assist their business. The next round of the series will be distributed towards the end of 2004.

If you have not received the VEGEnote folder or the latest editions please contact your State Vegetable Industry Development Officer to ensure you are on the mailing list – this is available free to all vegetable levy payers - see contact details in this edition of Vegetable Platter.

**Lettuce Aphid Updates:**

**Lettuce Aphid Vigilance Continues**

The vegetable industry is keeping a very close check on the Lettuce Aphid, since it was first detected in Tasmania, about five months ago.

“We are well prepared, thanks to the combined efforts of growers, researchers and industry bodies,” CEO AUSVEG, Euan Laird, said.

“Safe management options are ready to use and special monitoring techniques, developed by State Departments of Agriculture, are in place to give early warning of the pest’s arrival on the mainland,” he added.

Thought to have come from New Zealand, Lettuce Aphid (also known as the currant-lettuce aphid) is a major new pest of lettuce. It congregates deep inside the lettuce head but in low numbers causes little damage.

“Every effort is being made to prevent the aphid crossing the Tasman. For example, signs banning lettuce on the ‘Spirit of Tasmania’ have been in place for some time,” Euan said.

However, the pest has a complex breeding cycle and is easily carried by the wind. Its arrival on the mainland is still possible.

“Maintaining interstate trade is a key issue for growers when any new pest arrives,” Euan said.

The Domestic Quarantine Market Access Working Group [The State plant health regulators] is working with industry, to develop trading protocols, which would come into effect if the pest arrives on the mainland.

Early detection of Lettuce Aphid is critical to managing the vegetable industry’s response. Overseen by the Office of the Chief Plant Protection Officer, extensive detection surveys carried out on the mainland will continue. These surveys are a combination of random destructive sampling, in lettuce crops, supported by the use of yellow sticky traps. These devices are randomly placed around crops.
and catch a variety of airborne pests. Regular examination of the traps will monitor the arrival of the Lettuce Aphid. All surveys are being undertaken by the relevant State Departments.

If you detect Lettuce Aphid, clearly mark the collection site and contact your local Industry Development Officer (IDO), Department of Agriculture/Primary Industries or ring the Exotic Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881.

European growers have contended with this aphid for many years, and it’s considered a significant pest of salad crops. It is also commonly found in Canada and the United States.

AUSVEG formed the Lettuce Aphid Advisory Group (LAAG), to manage the limited resources available to deal with Lettuce Aphid, from an industry wide perspective. Members of this group are drawn from State grower associations and government department technical experts.

“AUSVEG levy funds are being used to provide management options to growers. The industry is keen to develop holistic approaches using integrated pest management to control Lettuce Aphid with minimal chemicals,” Euan said.

Some of the management options recommended for Lettuce aphid include: using resistant varieties, encouraging beneficial insects and using Confidor® in seedling drenches. For more information on management options, growers are advised to refer to The Lettuce Aphid VEGEnote, your Vegetable IDO or Department of Agriculture/Primary Industries.

**Lettuce aphid weed survey – the latest information from NSW DPI Lettuce Leaf publication.**

The Department of Primary Industries in Tasmania has surveyed weeds and other hosts for the lettuce aphid, (*Nasonovia ribis-nigri*). The lettuce aphid was recorded on **Hawksbeard** (*Crepis spp*.), **Nipplewort** (*Lapsana spp.*) and it was found around a glass house on **Hawkbit** (*Leontodon taraxacoides*).

Photo 11: JBhakesbeard.jpg Caption: Aphids on Hawksbeard (*Crepis spp.*)

The lettuce aphid was not recorded on the sampled sowthistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*) and Hawkweed (*Hieracium spp*.), even though Hawkweed is a secondary host in New Zealand. Currants (*Ribes spp.*) have been sampled and to date eggs have not been recorded. Indications are that *Nasonovia* are able to be present on their secondary hosts (including lettuce) all year in Tasmania. The lettuce aphid monitoring and survey work is ongoing.

For more information contact Lionel Hill  DPIWE Tasmania Tel: (03) 6421 7636

**Lettuce aphid projects**

Horticulture Australia Limited and Ausveg Leafy group representatives met in late July and decided upon industry priorities for lettuce aphid research. The
general consensus was that an IPM approach should be taken to manage this new pest. Projects will look at developing long term resistance management strategies that integrate cultural, chemical and natural predator control of aphids. Cultural strategies include using resistant varieties, controlling weeds around the farm and destroying old crops.

**How are growers coping with the aphid?**

The lettuce aphid has had a presence in lettuce throughout the Tasmanian winter, in greatly reduced numbers when compared to the Autumn aphid levels. Fancy salad mix lettuces are grown year round and hearting lettuces are not cut over the winter. Planting started again in August for hearting varieties.

Both field grown salad mix and hearting lettuce growers are opting to use a Confidor® drench for lettuce aphid protection. This is being applied at the nursery level. The Confidor® drench adds an extra 1.5 cents to the cost of a plant, this varies with rate. An offset to this cost is that growers are using a lot less Pirimor®, Dimethoate and other insecticides used for thrips and leaf hoppers. All residue tests to date have been well below the stated MRL for imidacloprid.

In the long term growers plan to incorporate Nasonovia resistant varieties and Confidor® drench free periods into their lettuce aphid management strategies.

**Nas resistant variety trial**

In late June, Gatton research station had a lettuce variety trial where Rijk Zwaan Nasonovia (Nas) resistant varieties were compared to the industry standards. The hearting varieties ‘45-82RZ’ ‘Magic’, ‘45-60RZ’, ‘Annie’, ‘45-98RZ’, ‘Casino’ all showed similar tolerances to tipburn and other diseases. Generally the Nas resistant varieties performed equally or a little better than the standard varieties. In this trial ‘Magic’ and ‘Annie’ were smaller in size and were not quite as uniform as the other varieties.

In the Cos trial ‘Carolus RZ’, scored similarly to ‘Lobjoits’ in most criteria, however ‘Lobjoits’ was out of it’s slot with 80% of lettuce bolting. The Nas resistant fancy lettuce also performed well, however some varieties were poor in uniformity and too open with leaves falling away from the heart.

For more information about the variety trial contact:
John Duff, QDPI Tel: (07) 5466 2213 or Mark Stevens, Rijk Zwaan Tel: (0418) 741 355

The current lettuce IPM project is compiling data from Nasonovia resistant lettuce variety trials around the country. All the information collected from such trials is being compiled and will be published for the lettuce industry. If you have a variety trial that you would like to be included please contact Andrew Creek, NSW Department of Primary Industries, Ph (02) 6951 2653, Fax (02) 6951 2692, email andrew.creek@agric.nsw.gov.au.
Are YOU Getting The Information You Need?
The National Vegetable Levy and Horticulture Australia Limited have been funding research and development projects since late 1996. Much of the research is crop specific and is available to you. Brassica growers as an example are direct mailed the Brassica Integrated Pest Management newsletter, Clubroot research outcomes, Brassica IPM CDROMs, Bunchline Common Diseases Field Guide and the DBM two-window spray strategy updates.
To ensure you are getting the latest research results and news of meetings or conferences make sure you are on the SA Vegetable Industry database. This database is for the vegetable industry only and is not available to anyone other than the state vegetable IDO to be certain that you get the information you need (and have paid for via the levy).
If you are not receiving emails or post outs from the IDO contact Craig Feutrill, SA Vegetable IDO on cfeutrill@arris.com.au, (08) 8303 6714, mobile 0418 831 089 or a letter to PO Box 206 Highgate, SA, 5063 listing your name, crops grown and contact details.

South Australian Vegetable Industry Development Project:
Craig Feutrill
Phone (08) 8303 6714
Fax (08) 8303 6752
Mobile 0418 831 089
Email:cfeutrill@arris.com.au