



Don't play Russian Roulette With Unregistered Chemicals.

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Introduction

Chemical users should only use agvet chemicals that are registered by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) in accordance with usage directions specified on the label. The use and sale of unregistered chemicals is illegal under State and Commonwealth law.

Registered chemical advantages

Registered agricultural chemicals have passed a rigorous testing program that ensures the products are fit for their intended use. In addition to efficacy testing to ensure that products do what they claim to do, registered chemical products have also passed a barrage of environmental tests, safety tests, and toxicity tests to ensure that appropriate controls can be implemented to manage identified risks.

Manufacturers of registered chemical products also provide a warranty when their products are used according to the label instructions.

Registered agricultural chemicals have an APVMA Approval Number printed on the label as a sign that the product has passed through the registration process and that it is registered for use. The Approval Number is printed at the bottom of the label and will use the format "APVMA Approval No. 33041/0801", with the number being a unique identifier of the chemical product.

With unregistered agricultural chemicals, there may be little information available about the product or what it actually contains - apart from someone saying, 'It should work ok', which is really just not good enough.

Reasons not to use unregistered chemicals

Growers should have a number of concerns regarding the use of unregistered agricultural chemicals, including:

- a) Both the supply and use of unregistered agricultural chemicals are offences carrying significant penalties;
- b) The actual ingredients in an unregistered product

may differ from what they should be, and there is no warranty if the product is faulty;

- c) There may be contaminants in unregistered chemical products that may leave unacceptable residues in the crop to which they are applied, possibly resulting in the destruction of the crop;
- d) Use of unregistered chemicals may affect growers who do not use them. In the case of an unacceptable residue detected in an export market that results from unregistered chemical use, it is likely that all growers would be penalised, not just the grower who used an unregistered product; and
- e) New tests are available to detect unregistered chemicals in produce, so there is a high chance that any such use will be identified – and investigated by DPI.

DPI is aware that from time to time, a small number of growers may consider using an unregistered chemical product - and the reason is most likely related to the price of the unregistered product compared to that of the registered product.

Registered agricultural chemical products are priced to include all testing and registration process costs. It's important to remember that in the end, it is the testing and registration process that provides assurance of quality and efficacy of these chemicals.

DPI randomly samples and tests produce grown in Victoria. Where there is a possibility that unregistered agricultural chemicals may have been used, DPI conducts targeted tests for these crops.

It really is a bit like Russian Roulette - the more a grower considers using an unregistered chemical product, the more likely it is that the use will be detected, which could be bad news for the person who used the chemical, as well as their entire industry.

Further information

For more information about chemical use and registration of agricultural chemicals contact:



- DPI Chemical Standards Officers
 - North West
 - Alan Roberts (03) 5430 4416
 - Dave Rumbold (03) 5430 4806
 - North East
 - Steven Field (03) 5824 5532
 - South West & Port Phillip West
 - Les Toohey (03) 5573 0715
 - Jo Robinson (03) 5355 0522
 - Gippsland & Port Phillip East
 - David Stewart (03) 9785 0173
 - Michael Laity (03) 9785 0191
- DPI Chemical Standards website - www.dpi.vic.gov.au/chemicalstandards
- APVMA website - www.apvma.gov.au

The previous version of this note was published in July 2005.

The advice provided in this publication is intended as a source of information only. Always read the label before using any of the products mentioned. The State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.