MEMORANDUM

TO: Agricultural Extension Agents and Interested Parties

FROM: Dennis Howard, Chief, Pesticide Regulation Section DWH

SUBJECT: Section 18 Approval of the use of potassium salt of hop beta acids (HopGuard®II) in honeybee colonies to control varroa mites.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently approved the Maryland Department of Agriculture's request for a specific exemption under section 18 of FIFRA, to allow the use of HopGuard®II to control varroa mites in honeybee colonies. HopGuard®II contains 16% potassium salt of hop beta acids and is manufactured by BetaTec Hop Products, a subsidiary of John I. Hass, Inc. This specific exemption expires December 31, 2014.

Use of potassium salt of hop beta acids under this emergency exemption program also allows application to packaged bees prior to installation in colonies for bees that are used to start new honeybee colonies. For this use strips may be applied at a rate of three half strips per 2lb. to 3 lb. package of adult worker bees. Cut strips in half at the fold and attach three half strips to the top of package so that the strips are hanging within the package. Place bees in the package after the strips are attached. The bees should remain in contact with the strips for at least 48 hours.

In colonies, HopGuard® II strips may be applied at the rate of one strip per five frames covered with bees in each brood chamber or two strips per ten frames covered with bees in the brood chamber. Strips are to be placed only in the brood chamber (not the honey super). Folded strips must be opened and hung over one of the center brood frames with on-half of the strip on each side of the frame as shown in the pictogram. If using a second strip, apply it to an adjacent center frame about four inches away from the first strip. Strips may be placed hanging between frames and, within the colony cluster and not laid on top of the frame Leave the strip(s) in the colony for 30 days. Honey bees tend to chew the cardboard strips; however, remove any remaining strips after 30 days. Strips are saturated with liquid and should be applied “as is”. Do not remove the liquid from the strip.

A maximum of three applications per year (6 strips) or approximately 24.0 grams of potassium salt of hop beta acids per ten frames of bees in the brood chamber is allowed. This limit includes all applications to the bee package (if applicable) and to the colony. Users may not take honey and wax from the brood chambers, only from the honey supers. HopGuard is not temperature sensitive and can be applied in the brood chamber during honeyflow. Honey supers can remain in the colony.
during treatment. For optimal results, apply HopGuard®II when little or no brood is present in the hive. **Applicators must wear protective (chemical-resistant) gloves when handling treated strips.**

Unused strips should be stored in a cool, dark area. Any unused registered product must either be returned to the manufacturer or distributor in unopened containers or disposed of in accordance with the Resource Conservation Recovery Act following the expiration of this emergency exemption.

The Maryland Department of Agriculture’s Pesticide Regulation Section is responsible for ensuring that all provisions of this specific exemption (Section 18) are met. **Therefore, any accidents or incidents involving the use of HopGuard®II must be immediately reported to the Pesticide Regulation Section.**

Your help in disseminating this information is greatly appreciated.

DWH: dh
cc: Section 18 file