



NAFTA Technical Working Group on Pesticides  
Grupo de Trabajo Técnico del TLCAN sobre Plaguicidas  
Le groupe de travail technique de l' ALENA sur les pesticides

**NAFTA TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON PESTICIDES**  
**Ixtapa, Mexico**  
**November 7-9, 2007**

**MEETING SUMMARY REPORT**

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**Introduction**

The Executive Board of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) Technical Working Group on Pesticides (TWG) met in Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo, Mexico from November 7 to 9, 2007. The meeting was hosted by Dr. Octavio Carranza, Director General de Inocuidad Agroalimentaria, Acuícola y Pesquera del Servicio Nacional de Sanidad, Inocuidad y Calidad Agroalimentaria<sup>1</sup> /Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación<sup>2</sup> (DGIAAP/SENASICA/SAGARPA). Government officials from Mexico, the United States, and Canada attended, including Dr. Richard Aucoin, Chief Registrar of Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) and Dr. Debra Edwards, Director of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Office of Pesticide Programs (OPP). There was also strong stakeholder participation from all three countries, including growers and registrants.

Recommendations from the three breakout group (BOG) discussions are reflected in this summary where appropriate. Government officials facilitated the BOG discussions, and a stakeholder representative acted as rapporteur. Breakout groups presented their report to the plenary, and presentations are attached to this summary. The topics covered by the breakout groups are as follows:

- Breakout group 1 (BOG 1): Listening Session on Stakeholder Views of TWG Role in Agricultural Area
- Breakout group 2 (BOG 2): Closing the MRL/Registration Gap – Development and Use of Grower Priorities
- Breakout group 3 (BOG 3): Listening Session on Stakeholder Views of TWG Role in Non-Agricultural Area

**Opening Remarks and Country Updates**

Dr. Octavio Carranza welcomed participants from Mexico, the United States and Canada and commended Amada Velez for her good work as the Mexican co-chair over the last

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<sup>1</sup> National Service for Sanitary Food Safety and Quality

<sup>2</sup> Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food

years. He also provided an update on Mexican key activities related to pesticide regulation. He outlined that the Government of Mexico has approved a new structure for SENASICA which is expected to streamline the organization's operations. He also indicated that SAGARPA has renewed its federal Animal Health and Plant Laws. With the coming into force of these new laws, SAGARPA can now carry out its compliance and enforcement work effectively and efficiently. The onus will be on stakeholders to comply with these laws and follow Good Manufacturing Practices and Good Agricultural Practices. These two laws clarify the roles of the SENASICA/SAGARPA and COFEPRIS/SS, that is, who is responsible for what. Dr. Carranza concluded that these changes are good news for México as they relate to pesticide regulations under the NAFTA TWG and this is a good step forward for the protection of human health and the environment within the North American region.

Dr. Richard Aucoin outlined the Government of Canada's priorities for the upcoming parliamentary session, which included improving Canada's environment and health, introducing measures for food and product safety, and recognizing farmers' views and discussed briefly how these priorities impact the PMRA. Dr. Aucoin identified some of the current challenges faced by pesticide regulators and discussed steps Canada is taking to address some of these challenges. He provided updates on the implementation of Canada's Pest Control Products Act and efforts being made in Canada to address issues related to maximum residue limits (MRLs/tolerances). Furthermore, he thanked the United States and Mexico for the comments they provided on the Canadian proposal to revoke the 0.1 ppm general MRL policy. Dr. Aucoin informed the Working Group about PMRA's new Strategic Plan which will focus on life-cycle management, international regulatory cooperation, strong agency science, all with the goal of establishing strong, consistent standards for protecting Canadians' health and the environment. He concluded by thanking the NAFTA TWG and stakeholder groups for the significant accomplishments to date and encouraged them to continue to work together on the NAFTA TWG agenda.

Dr. Edwards outlined three priority goals for OPP, including being an effective gateway to the pesticide market; being effective stewards of existing pesticides; and enhancing OPP's science and policy framework. The main focus of OPP's work will be on risk reduction, food safety and trade, public health product efficacy, and environmental justice. Some of the key efforts to be carried out in 2008 include: making pesticide registration decisions in accordance with domestic safety and risk/benefit standard within timeframes mandated by the Pesticide Registration Improvement Act; completing and implementing re-registration eligibility decisions; ramping up Registration Review activities; efficiently pursuing vital international efforts (e.g., NAFTA, OECD<sup>3</sup>, China) to promote joint risk reduction; collaborating in the development of the next generation of data requirements (computational toxicology, genomics); working toward transition of the endocrine disruptor screening program into the routine registration review process; developing a human health risk assessment framework for spray drift and volatilization; developing a framework for consideration of epidemiology data in risk assessment and risk management; and, developing a nanotechnology regulatory framework for pesticides.

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<sup>3</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

## **Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs/Tolerances)/Registration Gap**

Government officials reported on ongoing activities to address the differences in MRLs and registrations available among different NAFTA countries, including activities to address existing differences (retrospective), and those to prevent new differences from arising (prospective).

In particular, NAFTA officials have been working with key stakeholders to develop a systematic approach for addressing grower priority needs on a primarily chemical basis through the development of a Grower Priority List database for the registration of products and the establishment of MRLs. The growers presented an update in plenary on the Grower Priority List database leading to a more detailed discussion in BOG 2 where several implementation issues were raised. The Executive Board applauded the grower's extensive efforts and good progress made on the database.

The TWG fully discussed the BOG 2 recommendations and agreed on several next steps, including a series of conference calls between the growers and the TWG government leads to: identify and resolve questions on the use and administration of the database; plan outreach efforts to encourage more growers to submit their priorities; plan TWG participation in the roll-out of the database expected in early 2008; and, determine the role of the NAFTA governments in the existing database Oversight Committee.

The TWG will also: start analyzing the database, including clearly articulating the government's plans to stakeholders; consider future funding options and management/ownership of the database including how other NAFTA countries can enter their priorities into the database; link the database initiative to North American registration and re-registration planning efforts; and, fold into the database the remaining TWG commodity pilot priorities (for pulse crops, tomatoes, and potatoes) and the new TWG Avocado Project priorities. An update on all of these activities will be provided by the TWG leads at the next Executive Board meeting in May 2008.

The Executive Board also approved Completion Sheets outlining the extensive work completed for the Pulse, Tomato, and Potato commodity pilots which will soon be posted on the TWG websites. The Executive Board discussed effective ways of communicating progress in resolving trade irritants under the commodity-based pilots to the growers.

## **Joint Review and Worksharing**

The Executive Board reaffirmed the importance of NAFTA joint reviews and worksharing in addressing MRL and registration disparities among the NAFTA countries. Under the Joint Review program, the regulatory agency leads will continue holding North American registration planning meetings with registrants and will also pursue joint discussions involving the U.S. IR-4 and the Pest Management Centre of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada on minor uses. The TWG expressed support for the

on-going work to pursue further expansion of joint reviews and worksharing for minor uses, as well as exploring a role in the Grower Priority Database. In addition, the TWG leads agreed to work on subsequent amendments to add new uses for joint review chemicals again using the joint review.

On a global level, the NAFTA partners will continue pursuing multi-lateral joint reviews for all types of pesticides including conventionals, biopesticides, both agricultural and non- agricultural pesticides, including antimicrobials.

Several worksharing activities were discussed under the Re-evaluation and Registration Review programs. As the TWG leads work to finalize more detailed workplans for two pilot projects by April 2008, the Executive Board requested that these workplans include consideration of the Registration Review/Re-evaluation programs as a mechanism to address MRLs/registration gaps. Developments on the two pilot projects and future joint workplan efforts will be communicated to stakeholders in 2008. In the meantime, the TWG leads will continue development of a crosswalk to identify common active ingredients to develop a workplan for further worksharing efforts, and continue coordination and cooperation on key active ingredients such as atrazine and endosulfan.

### **NAFTA Labelling**

The TWG leads provided an update on the development of NAFTA labels for hard surface disinfectants. The TWG project has successfully concluded with the development of a Guidance Document for use by registrants seeking NAFTA Non-Ag Labels. A project completion sheet will be posted shortly on the TWG websites. New NAFTA label submissions are expected from two registrants in the near future, and the Executive Board agreed that differing claim issues will be addressed through joint reviews and label submissions.

The NAFTA Label Task Force reported on their significant progress to date, including specifically the key outcomes from their last meeting held in October 2007. Based on recommendations made by the TWG leads, the Executive Board agreed that the Task Force will meet biannually (Spring/Fall) to continue work on NAFTA label candidates for agricultural products. The Task Force was also asked to develop specific Terms of Reference for their continued work which will be posted on the website. Current issues to be worked on by the Task Force include: review timelines (for amendments); internet-only use directions (when a pilot is ready); and US Customs issues. It was noted that the Task Force will continue to address harmonization of symbol/signal words between the United States and Canada by evaluating each label on a case-by- case basis. The TWG leads will provide another status report at the next Executive Board meeting in May 2008.

With regard to the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS), COFEPRIS representatives reported on national developments in Mexico for GHS implementation. PMRA agreed to explore working with OPP on a GHS

pilot project, while the TWG partners agreed to exchange information with Mexico on national standards for GHS implementation.

## **Policies and Data Requirements**

The government agencies provided various updates on policies and data requirements for pesticides as follows.

### Mexican Standard

Mexico presented an update on the development of the Mexican Official Standard on MRLs, along with the proposed timeline and an expected date of publication in 2010. This effort is also taking into consideration the work being done within NAFTA, Codex<sup>4</sup> and the European Union. Mexico agreed to share further information with the TWG, as appropriate, as the development of the Standard progresses. The Executive Board congratulated Mexico for taking these significant steps. Additionally, OPP representatives agreed to provide training to Mexican officials on conducting dietary risk assessments in early December.

### Canada's 0.1ppm Policy

PMRA reported on progress to date with the Canadian Default MRL Revocation Policy, indicating that issuance of the new policy is contingent on amendments to Canada's Food and Drugs Act, which are expected in February 2008. PMRA implementation plans include adoption of U.S. MRLs which are at or below 0.1 parts per million (ppm).

### GAP issues

The TWG discussed policy issues related to Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and the setting of MRLs, which will be continued at the next Executive Board meeting in May 2008.

### Soil & Ecoregions Crosswalk

The TWG project leads provided an update on the development of a guidance document for determining the applicability of environmental fate and transport studies conducted on foreign soils for use in environmental risk assessments. Good progress has been made on the Guidance Document which is expected to be finalized by March 2008.

The Executive Board approved a new TWG project on determining the acceptability of terrestrial field dissipation studies conducted outside of North America, and also agreed to propose this as an OECD project. A new TWG project sheet, entitled "Ecoregions Crosswalk", will be posted on the TWG websites and a status update will be provide by the TWG leads at the next Executive Board meeting in May 2008.

### Safety and Uncertainty Factors

Canada reported to the TWG on national efforts to develop a public consultation document related to the use of safety and uncertainty factors, including policy areas of special interest to NAFTA regulators and stakeholders. Canada debriefed the TWG

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<sup>4</sup> Codex Alimentarius Commission

about the type of comments received during the public consultations. OPP representatives were invited to participate in a Canadian public workshop to be held on this topic in December 2007.

#### Field Trial Efficiencies

The TWG leads presented an approach for developing Field Trial Guidelines for NAFTA Residue Studies. The Executive Board agreed with the new proposal whereby the United States will compile census data to determine the number of field trials required for a NAFTA submission on a crop-by-crop basis. A new TWG project sheet will be developed by the TWG leads for Executive Board approval at their next meeting in May 2008.

### **Global Trade Environment**

#### U.S. Import Product Safety Strategies

The United States provided an update on domestic efforts related to a recent US presidential Executive Order on the safety of imported products. The NAFTA partners agreed to continue information-sharing in this area, as appropriate.

#### Codex Standards

The TWG discussed NAFTA efforts as they relate to Codex standards and agreed to: promote the use of the fast track procedure and decision-making criteria to ensure continued efficient establishment of Codex MRLs; encourage registrants to submit requests for Codex MRLs particularly for the newer, reduced risk chemistries; and, promote support for crop groupings. Overall efforts to advance NAFTA activities within various international fora, including Codex and the Organization for Co-operation and Development (OECD), will be reflected in the new NAFTA TWG 5-year Strategy. The NAFTA TWG also agreed to share and exchange information on NAFTA adoption of Codex standards.

### **Biopesticides**

The TWG leads presented an update on a wide range of biopesticides activities underway, including some recommendations to the Executive Board to foster increased adoption of biopesticides. The Executive Board will consider placement of biopesticides on the agenda for the next TWG Stakeholder meeting in late 2008, including a possible presentation by relevant stakeholders on biopesticides demonstration projects. Noting that Mexico is in process of finalizing a new regulation on organic food, representatives from SAGARPA and COFEPRIS expressed interest in the biopesticides area. The US will share information on the demonstration projects with Canada and Mexico through the Secretariat.

### **Non-Agricultural Pesticides**

The TWG leads presented the revised project sheet on harmonization of non-agricultural pesticides data requirements, including the comparison matrix between the Canadian

Therapeutics Product Directorate (TPD) and U.S. OPP Antimicrobial Division (AD). The TWG discussed how antimicrobial products and non-agricultural initiatives are being coordinated within the TWG and reviewed a spreadsheet identifying organizations involved in antimicrobials. Given some of the resource limitations within TPD, efforts will be made to explore appropriate mechanisms for AD-TPD collaboration on non-agricultural products under their jurisdiction. Collaboration between AD and PMRA will continue for non-agricultural products within their jurisdiction

The Non-Agricultural Working Group (NAWG) gave a presentation in plenary and outlined a number of priorities, including the development of data comparison for non-agricultural domestic pesticides. These issues were also discussed in BOG 3. In response to recommendations made from the BOG 3 session, non-agricultural government leads agreed to continue support of the Joint Reviews (including category B), worksharing, NAFTA label review, and the cooperative re-evaluation of older pesticides. The government leads also requested that stakeholders continue to evaluate NAFTA initiatives based on the NAFTA criteria discussed and requested that industry provide specific examples of areas which require additional attention for non-agricultural conventional pesticides and biopesticides.

### **New TWG Activities**

The Executive Board discussed and approved a new TWG project on regulatory cooperation and harmonization of lower risk pest management strategies for azinphos-methyl (AZM). The goal of this project is two-fold: to coordinate and harmonize North American regulatory activities pertaining to the transition of the agricultural industry from the use of AZM to lower risk pest management strategies, and to provide a level playing field for North American trade of commodities affected by the phase-out of AZM.

The Executive Board discussed and approved another new TWG project on estimating percent of crop treated (PCT) and projected percent of crop treated (PPCT) for pesticides. The goal of this effort is conduct a detailed review of procedures and statistical methods for estimating PCT and PPCT with a pesticide. The issues raised during the review will support the project objective, which is to investigate the potential to harmonize these procedures and statistical methods.

Both of these new TWG project sheets will be posted on the NAFTA websites.

### **Development of the Next 5-Year Strategy for the NAFTA TWG**

A status report was provided to the Executive Board on the development of the new TWG strategic plan and related accomplishments report. The Executive Board affirmed the three overarching strategic objectives that will be pursued to guide the TWG work, as follows:

1. Provide U.S.-Canadian-Mexican users with equal access to and same time introduction of pest management tools.
2. Work cooperatively to re-evaluate/reregister older pesticides using each country's re-evaluation programs to the fullest to increase efficiency.
3. Integrate smart business approaches and practices into NAFTA TWG work.

The Executive Board is expected to review and approve a draft at their next meeting in May 2008, followed by public release and consultation on the document.

The stakeholder input obtained during the break-out group discussions regarding the TWG's role in agricultural and non-agricultural issues will also be taken into consideration as the draft five-year strategy is prepared.

### **Upcoming Meetings**

The next Executive Board meeting will take place in May 2008 in Canada. The subsequent government-stakeholder meeting will be scheduled for late 2008 in the United States.

### **Attachments**

Breakout Group Presentations

**BOG 1 Report**  
**Stakeholder Views on Role of TWG in Agriculture Issues**

1. Joint Reviews become dissimilar over time—need to keep use sites and formulations the same or similar over time
2. Reevaluation: a. Provide a list of joint reevaluations in advance so that stakeholders can be more prepared, b. Use reevaluation as a way to solve MRL issues, c. US include US/Canada differences in MRLs in its overview document as a part of initiating a registration review
3. NAFTA culture:
  - a. Regulatory agencies continue to emphasize harmonization and have passion for being more efficient and flexible
  - b. Companies recognize global markets for commodities and pesticides and act accordingly
  - c. Growers need commodity groups to participate and more consistency in participation
4. Include PMRA's risk reduction strategies as part of the priority setting process (don't just select minor crops for harmonization of MRLs, etc.)
5. Take pilot projects and put them into broad effect
6. Broader than NAFTA (i.e. OECD, WTO, EU, Japan)
7. Make the process as simple as possible
8. In Mexico's new pesticide registration process there needs to be a change so that a registration does not have to be in place in US or Canada before coming to Mexico.

**BOG 2 Report**  
**Closing MRL/Registration Gap - Grower Priority List**

Three areas discussed:

- A) Issues on/about the database
- B) How it will be used ?
- C) Incentives to companies to participate

**A) Issues on/about the database**

- Inclusiveness of the data (US/CN/MX)
- Funding
  - o Currently from Market Access Program
  - o Future (to keep it current, \$40K/year ?)
  - o Feedback – making/keeping it user friendly
- Want outreach to CropLife and non-CL members
- Additional entrants to the db (CN/MX/other) \$5K + to add data
- Agreed to keep db as a separate entity
- Extra data points added to db will be very important  
(E.g./pest/crop, trade irritant status)
- Must be careful about adding too many points
- Must include process on how each country set their priorities

## **B) How it will be used ?**

- Users will be govt, industry, growers, NA and abroad
- It will be used to facilitate workplans, business plans, and to persuade company participation
- Discussed additions to the db would require grower group vetting, not just individual grower input
- Once priority issues are resolved, the priority will be removed but the issue will stay in the db
- Identity on the list is critical to initiate first steps of resolution
- Citrus is a non-issue for CN, but is an issue for MX and the US
- Having all 3 countries involved gives the priorities better balance
- The pulse industry has gone through the priority process and differences in how priorities are set did not matter
- Once priorities are identified, the industry can work together across borders to resolve the issues
- Need a win-win to get company management support
- Need a strong business case to get interest
- Bundling of enough new crops to a product is a good rationale

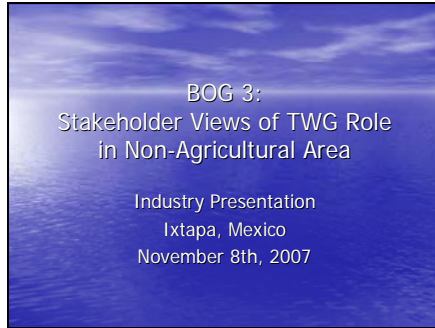
## **C) Incentives to companies to participate**

- Make existing data work harder
- Minimize/eliminate extra data requirements
- Look at PRIA and PMRA fee structures, work to minimize extra registration costs
- Focus on wins/publicize gaps in differences in registrations and MRLs
- Suggestion to use IR-4/AAFC dbases and expand submissions, look at Codex data
- Registrants should look upon this as a business opportunity and not just a cost
- Government – the database has implications for Registration/Re-evaluation
- Closer working relationship is anticipated in Round 2, and use of the db is anticipated
- Governments has many other priorities such as risk reduction, biopesticides, consumer confidence
- Need to look at using the db for overlap on other priorities to create another win-win

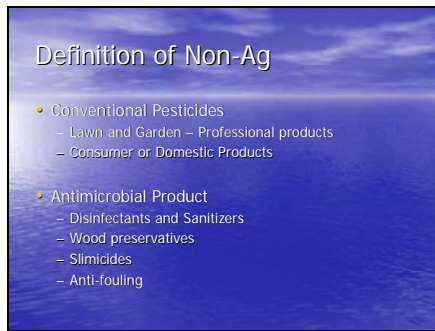
# BOG 3 Report

## Stakeholder Views on Role of TWG in Non-Agriculture Issues

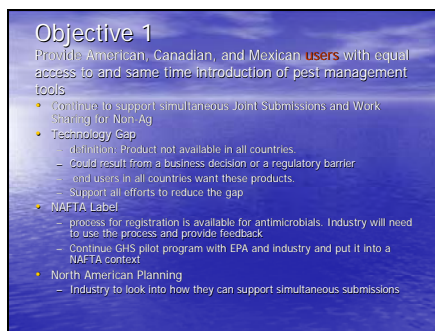
Slide 1



Slide 2



Slide 3



## Slide 4

**Objective 2**  
Work cooperatively to reevaluate/reregister older pesticides using each country's re-evaluation programs to increase efficiency

- Non-Ag Industry is very supportive of this Objective
  - Industry to work with governments to understand what needs to be done to provide support for Mexican, Canadian, and U.S. data requirements
- Need all three governments to coordinate a work plan for review of AIs used for non-Ag uses where review programs exist in each country

## Slide 5

**Objective 3**  
Integrate smart business approaches and practices into NAFTA TWG work

- COFEPRIS, PMRA, TPD, and EPA have different data requirements and AI review processes for Non-Ag products.
  - As a first step, we need clarity on the differences between the three countries.
  - Step 2 would be the prioritization and development of work projects to address the differences
- Industry supports harmonized data requirements, environmental protection, and human health protection.
- Industry is supportive of developing reduced risk Non-Ag products

## Slide 6

**Objective 3**  
Integrate smart business approaches and practices into NAFTA TWG work

- Industry proposes the development of a communication group that requires one member from each of the following groups COFEPRIS, Industry Canada, PMRA, TPD, EPA, Industry U.S., and Industry Mexico to drive effective communications on TWG issues
- There is a need for OECD information sharing with NAFTA TWG – Plan should address.
- Industry needs to share current NAFTA TWG communication tools with Industry