

MAA Research Task Force Reaches Agreement with U.S. EPA For Continued Use of MSMA

On January 16, 2009, the MAA Research Task Force (Task Force) signed an agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which permits the continued use of MSMA. The details of the agreement and the conditions set forth for the various uses of the product are summarized below.

MSMA Use on Cotton is Declared Eligible for Re-registration

EPA will declare MSMA use on cotton eligible for re-registration and will amend the Reregistration Eligibility Decision (RED) of August 10, 2006 accordingly.

EPA will request that **all registrants** of MSMA provide data confirming that no detectable residues of inorganic arsenic are present in meat or milk of cows due to consumption of by-products from cotton treated with MSMA.

To prevent restrictions on rotation of edible crops with cotton, the registrants will provide EPA with information on uptake of MSMA by food crops grown in rotation with cotton.

The directions for use of MSMA products on cotton will be revised to allow one annual application of 2 lbs/A with one additional application when required. Pre-plant application will no longer be permitted, and 50 foot buffer strips will be required on fields bordering permanent water bodies.

MSMA Use on Golf Courses, Sod Farms and Highway Rights of Way will be Continued

MSMA use on golf courses, sod farms and highway rights of way will continue until December 31, 2013. During 2012 (before the discontinuation of these uses), EPA, through one of the Agency's external peer-review groups, will evaluate the scientific information available on any risk posed by inorganic arsenic. The use of MSMA will continue beyond 2013 should the review result in a conclusion that there is no health concern at the doses of exposure resulting from the relevant uses. EPA will also take into account additional information available on the benefits conferred by MSMA. This is particularly important due to the increased problems of weed resistance to products other than MSMA, particularly in the Southeastern United States.

The Task Force is hopeful that the reviews described above will enable EPA to extend these use patterns beyond 2013 and to declare them eligible for re-registration.

The directions for use of MSMA for these applications will be revised as follows:

Golf courses:

One broadcast application will be allowed on newly constructed courses.

Application on existing courses will be limited to spot treatment (100 sq ft per spot), not to exceed 25% of the total course in one year.

Sod farms:

Two broadcast applications will be allowed per crop. A 25 foot buffer strip will be required for those fields bordering permanent water bodies.

Highway rights-of-way:

Two broadcast applications will be allowed per year. A 100 foot buffer strip will be required adjacent to permanent water bodies.

Other MSMA Uses

Certain uses of MSMA will not be permitted after December 31, 2010. Those uses are:

- Residential turf
- Forestry
- Non-bearing fruit and nuts
- Citrus, bearing and non-bearing
- Drainage ditch banks, railroad, pipeline, and utility rights of way, fence rows, storage yards and similar non-crop areas
- Bluegrass, fescue and ryegrass grown for seed (this use may be continued till 2013).

MSMA uses in Florida, other than for cotton, will cease and registrants will delete the uses of the related products DSMA, CAMA and DMA (cacodylic acid and its sodium salt), by end of 2010.

The Long Term Outlook for Uses of MSMA Other than Cotton:

The Task Force strongly believes that there is growing scientific evidence that low doses of inorganic arsenic do not pose a concern to human health or to the environment. If an EPA science review, to convene in 2012, concurs with this position, then inorganic arsenic resulting from uses of MSMA will not pose a concern, and the Task Force will petition for restoration of some or all of MSMA uses.

The Task Force expresses its appreciation to the users of MSMA, as well as to weed scientists and other technical specialists for their efforts in reinforcing to EPA, and to other government officials, the critically important role MSMA plays in integrated pest management programs for its various uses.

Finally, the Task Force expresses its appreciation to the EPA staff and officials who participated in these challenging discussions and for working in a cooperative spirit to reach this important resolution.