

# Phosmet IRED Facts

October 31, 2001

## Action and Rationale

EPA is releasing its Interim Reregistration Eligibility Decision (IRED) for phosmet, which includes a determination to voluntarily cancel certain uses, continue registered uses with additional risk reduction, or continue uses under time-limited registrations with interim risk mitigation. An organophosphate insecticide first registered in 1966, phosmet is widely used in agriculture and provides important pest control benefits to growers of orchard fruit, nut, and other crops. However, some uses of phosmet also pose risks to agricultural workers, as well as ecological risks. The Agency's actions address both the risks and benefits associated with current agricultural uses of phosmet. EPA will publish a notice of availability of this IRED, which will include a 60-day comment period.

## Worker and Ecological Risk Reduction

To eliminate phosmet exposure in residential settings, improve worker safety, and lessen ecological risks, EPA's actions for phosmet include:

- **3 uses** will be **canceled** immediately – since safer pest control alternatives are available;
- **9 crop uses** would be eligible for **time-limited registrations** for 5 years if the registrations are amended to require additional risk reduction measures;
- **33 uses** would continue with additional risk mitigation measures.

## Time-Limited Registrations

The Agency has taken the approach of a time-limited registration for some uses of phosmet because both the risk to reentry workers and the benefits of the use on crops such as apples and blueberries are high. "High benefits" means that the withdrawal of phosmet from the market would result in significant economic impacts on the fruit industry. These effects are largely determined by the lack of alternative methods to control pest pressure effectively and economically.

To protect agricultural workers during the time-limited registration period, a variety of new and stringent

precautions would be implemented. These include longer intervals before workers may re-enter treated areas, reducing the amount of pesticide that may be applied, and in some cases limiting the number of applications.

## EPA's Review Process

The phosmet IRED concludes EPA's review of this individual pesticide through the organophosphate pilot public participation process. Through this process, EPA exchanged information on phosmet's uses, risks, and benefits with stakeholders and the public, and obtained significant input from interested parties. This input helped the Agency determine whether phosmet is eligible for

reregistration and meets the safety standard set by the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) of 1996. A final reregistration decision will be issued following completion of the cumulative risk assessment for the organophosphate pesticides.

**Risk Mitigation**

EPA's phosmet decision includes the following measures to reduce risks to workers, consumers, and the environment:

***To Reduce Worker Risks....***

- increase Restricted Entry Intervals (REIs)
- increase Pre-Harvest Interval (PHI) where appropriate
- require closed transfer systems
- require enclosed cabs or maximum personal protective equipment (PPE) for applicators
- registrants must conduct studies and provide data on monitoring cholinesterase levels of field workers; on the feasibility of using gloves; and update benefits information

***To Reduce Ecological Risks...***

- add spray drift language to labels
- add language for inward nozzle spray
- limit application amount
- prohibit application during bloom period

***To Encourage Use of Safer Alternatives...***

- encourage growers to develop Pest Management Strategic Plans
- issue time-limited registrations

**Provisions of the Phosmet IRED**

Action: Voluntary Cancellation		Date: Following Federal Register publication	
Use:	Domestic pets		Household fruit trees
		Household ornamental	

Action: Time-limited Registration		Date: Over a 5-year period	
Crop:	Apples	Crabapples	Peaches
	Apricots	Grapes	Pears
	Blueberries, highbush	Nectarines	Plums/prunes

Action: Continued Registration with New Requirements			
Crop:		Chestnut	
	Alfalfa	Chinquapin nuts	Macadamia nuts
		Christmas trees	

Almonds  
Beech nut  
Brazil nut  
Blueberries, lowbush  
Butternut  
Cashews  
Cattle (except high-  
pressure hose application)  
Cherries, tart  
Cherries, sweet

Clover  
Cotton  
Cranberries  
Evergreen trees  
Filberts  
Fire ants  
Hickory nuts  
Kiwifruit

Ornamental nursery stock  
Peas, dry  
Peas, fresh  
Pecans  
Pine seed orchards  
Pine seedlings  
Pistachios  
Potatoes  
Sweet Potatoes  
Swine  
Walnuts