

Understanding Pesticide Labels

Diligence, perseverance needed to keep up with labels.

In the First Quarter 2008 issue of *Milling Journal* (*Perceptions on Grain Protectants*, pp. 44-45), I mentioned that Suspend® SC, a product of Bayer CropScience containing 0.5 ppm of

deltamethrin, was registered as a grain protectant in 2007. I was wrong in assuming that it was registered in 2007 and also that it was registered for use on stored grain. Earlier labels and some confusing language led me astray.

Let me explain why I made the mistake. Soon after the article was published, my good friend Jerry Heath of the Industrial Fumigant Company, who keeps up with pesticides used in the grain and food in-

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dusty, sent me a polite email stating that Suspend SC is not currently labeled for use on grain.

However, if you check the Internet sources, there was a Suspend SC 2005/2006 label that listed the several sites where this formulation could be used, and it included, besides other sites, stored grain, stored seed, empty grain bins and warehouses.

Another 2006 Suspend SC label listed only empty

grain bins and warehouses. This perplexed me a bit, and I then checked the Environmental Protection Agency's Pesticide Product Label System (www.epa.gov/pesticides/pestlabels/), where one can check federally registered pesticides.

I entered the EPA Registration Number for the Suspend insecticide (432-763) and obtained a label that is called K-Orthine SC Insecticide (accepted by EPA in April 2005) containing the same percentage of deltamethrin as Suspend SC (4.75%). This particular label also has language in the label that indicates that it can be used on grain as well as on empty grain-holding structures.

Why All The Confusion?

On the Bayer web site, a news release dated March 27, 2006 titled "Suspend SC Label Amended to Include Stored Grain Pest Control in All States" ap-

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peared, and the language reads as follows:

... Suspend SC can be applied directly to grain, seed, and surfaces of empty grain bins and warehouses, killing insects as they move about or feed on grain or seed. Suspend SC can also be applied as a perimeter treatment to help prevent insect infestations of grain bins and warehouses. Grain and seeds listed on the label include barley, corn, oats, popcorn, rice, rye, sorghum and wheat. ...

Although Suspend now can be utilized as a grain protectant, its main use will be as an empty grain bin, warehouse and perimeter spray.

"An effective stored grain protectant, such as Storcide II will be more ideally suited for direct application to stored grain and seed due to its length of activity and performance," says Michael Newhouse, market manager for Bayer Environmental Science.

"When Storcide II is unavailable, Suspend SC is a cost effective, short-term option to protect grain and seed," he adds.

These statements make sense, because the grain protectant Storcide II is a combination product containing 3 ppm

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chlorpyrifos-methyl (Reldan) plus 0.5 ppm deltamethrin.

A second article from *Need to Know—Straight Talk for Professionals About Pests and Pest Control Products*, Volume 3, Issue 3, June 21, 2006, mentioned, "Suspend SC Insecticide Label Amended to Include Stored Grain Insect Control."

In April 2005, the amended Suspend SC Insecticide label was approved by EPA. This amended label has been registered in all states.

Among other changes, the uses for Suspend SC have been expanded to include stored grain pest control. Also, the active ingredient deltamethrin has CODEX MRL (maximum residue limits) tolerances, so labeled crops protected with

Suspend SC may be shipped to international geographic markets.

Suspend SC may now be used by professionals to control adult and accessible stages of the following stored grain pests: lesser grain borer, larger grain borer, Angoumois grain moth, Indian meal moth, tobacco moth, dermestids, and bean weevil.

Suspend SC also may suppress populations of the granary weevil, rice weevil, maize weevil, sawtoothed grain beetle, red flour beetle and confused flour beetle.

The current Suspend SC label how-

ever only mentions that it can be used in empty grain bins and warehouses.

Keeping Up With Labels is Difficult

It is difficult for researchers, extension educators, and pest management professionals to keep up with the latest amendments to pesticide labels and reasons for such amendments. After interaction with the Bayer folks, it became clear that they indeed had amended a label for use of deltamethrin on grain some time between 2005 and 2006 but never actually pursued it and decided against including ▶



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grain use on the label.

Since this incident, Bayer has removed all press and news releases that mention Suspend SC as a grain protectant.

It is best always to contact the manufacturer if there are any questions about current labels and sites where the product can be used.

Labels Change

While working on a court case last year about a grain protectant and appropriate application device to use for insecticide treatment of grain, I learned that labels undergo changes every year and one needs to study them carefully.

This is something we try to reinforce at all pesticide applicator training programs. It is absolutely essential for all pesticides users to read and understand labels; and as the label clearly states, using the product inconsistent with labeling is a violation of the law.

Sources of information on Pesticide Labels

My colleague, Dr. Phil Sloderbeck, extension entomologist, Kansas State University, has provided me with a list of useful sources for pesticide labels that I include below with his permission:

- A quick source could be a trade magazine that highlights new pesticides or label cancellations.

- Another source could be stored-grain management recommendations from neighboring states.

- A third source could be the representative of a chemical company whose product is of interest to you.

- A fourth source could be a State Department of Agriculture, which keeps current labels (registered in the state) on file.

One very helpful tool in this process is the National Pesticide Information Retrieval System (NPIRS) database hosted by Purdue University (<http://state.ceris.purdue.edu/>). This database allows the user to search for pesticides labeled for specific uses in various states. However, as with any database search, the process is not foolproof.

For example, just because a specific application site is on the label and a specific pest is on the label does not necessarily mean that the product is labeled for the pest on that site.

It also can be difficult because different products may use slightly different wording for the same site. For example,

one product may list a site as stored grain, another as stored small grains, and another as stored wheat.

Thus, you often have to try multiple searches to get a list of products that you feel fairly comfortable about being labeled for the commodity in question.

Diligence Required

Keeping up with labels and label language requires diligence, and I hope all pesticide users will check multiple sources of information, especially the manufacturer, for current label information.

The label language also is interpreted differently by different states, and this affects how users should be trained. Always read and understand pesticide labels!

NOTE: My sincere appreciation and thanks to Jerry Heath and Phil Sloderbeck for providing relevant information about pesticide labels.

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