



# Seed Crop Notes

Fall 1999

## Seed Conditioner Notification Statements

Mary Wadsworth, chair of the Alfalfa Seed Production Research Board; Anne Downs, CA Seed Association; and I met with representatives from the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) last February to request a reevaluation of the requirement for seed conditioner notification statements. We had been assured the request could be completed by the summer months but the Administration change created an unexpected workload, pushing the issue to the bottom of the pile.

### CURRENT STATUS

**You are still required to submit conditioner notification statements with seed from fields that have been treated with Capture®, Monitor®, Zephyr®, or any material that requires such notification.**

Copies of the form have been printed for the Ag Commissioner and should now be available.

Within the last few weeks, another visit to DPR took place, and a new strategy is being pursued. We asked that growers be required to submit a letter indicating *all* fields that were treated with *any* of the materials that require conditioner notification. This change would streamline the paperwork while still acknowledging the need for the grower to inform the conditioner that the use of the seed is restricted and proper disposal of straw and screenings is required.

Any new information regarding seed conditioner notification requirements will be released as soon as a decision is made.

## Revised Policy on Burning Dodder in Seed Fields

At the request of seed growers in Fresno County, I worked with the San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District to revise the existing policy on burning dodder in seed alfalfa fields. What follows is the new policy, which is now being enforced, although it awaits the official signature of the director.

I appreciate the attention this request received by the SJVAPCD and hope the change improves area growers' ability to manage dodder in seed alfalfa fields while we continue to look for alternative control strategies.

DODDER is a noxious weed in seed alfalfa, which is particularly troublesome to the alfalfa seed industry. Because of irrigation schedules and pesticide re-entry restrictions, the window of opportunity to burn for dodder control is often limited. The burning in both seed and feed alfalfa may be considered for a no burn day exemption and is conducted using the following burn procedures:

### A. Dodder in seed alfalfa

- 1) With an approved ignition device, light flaming followed in 1 or 2 days with a more complete flaming to burn the patch clean.
- 2) When required, diesel fuel may be applied to the dodder. After a minimum of 3 days from the diesel application the dodder may be burned using an approved ignition device, such as a propane or butane burner.

### B. Dodder in feed alfalfa must be burned in the limited time duration, about three days, between the harvest and when irrigation must occur to prevent dehydration damage.

- 1) Using an approved ignition device, such as a propane or butane burner, to burn the patch clean.

**NOTE:** The spraying or dousing of any accelerant such as gasoline, diesel, motor oils, or other such materials, to ignite open burns is prohibited.

## Grazing or Making Hay on Fields Treated with Zephyr®

The Department of Pesticide Regulation posted a notice on its August 16, 1999 website stating their intent to deny the request to amend the existing SLN for use of Zephyr on alfalfa grown for seed in California. The request involved a reduction in the grazing/harvest interval restriction for fields treated with Zephyr from its current 11-month period to 8 months after application. The denial was based on *insufficient data*. We are looking into the details, but suspect the concern was that the sampled fields had not been treated at the top of the label rate.

As many of you know, samples were collected from Central San Joaquin Valley alfalfa seed fields in February and March of this year. They were analyzed and results indicated no residues at the level of quantitation (2 ppb). Application rates in the sample fields ranged from 6-12 oz. per acre, with the majority of samples from fields treated at the 6 oz. rate. Only one field was treated at the 12 oz. rate.

Unfortunately, we will not be able to resubmit this request until Spring 2001, since treatments could only be applied during the summer of 2000 with samples collected the following spring.

**Remember - Read and follow all label information carefully. You must wait 11-months to graze or take a hay cutting from a field that was treated with Zephyr.**

### Help Wanted! Capture 24(c) Label Amendment

I will be collecting samples from alfalfa seed fields that were treated with Capture® during the 1999 production season to support a request to reduce the current harvest restriction. The grazing/harvest restriction is currently 8 months in selected San Joaquin Valley counties, and 11 months in the rest of the state. At the request of the Alfalfa Seed Production Research Board, I will be coordinating data collection in hopes of supporting a request for a *statewide* 90-day grazing/harvest interval.

As soon as possible, I need information from growers and/or PCA's in the Central San Joaquin Valley who used Capture (preferably late in the season) and expect to have 8-12" of regrowth in their fields within 90-days after application. Please call me and provide me with the following information:

- 1) Grower's name and phone number(s)
- 2) PCA's name and phone number(s)
- 3) Location of treated field(s)
- 4) Capture® treatment date, rate, and method of application (air or ground)

A copy of the written recommendation or other paperwork that documents the date of application and rate applied would be very helpful to me. However, I submit the samples by code number only. No grower or ranch names are included in the request for analysis or final reporting.

I will collect the samples within the 90-day window of opportunity and have them analyzed for Capture residues.

**Please let me know if you have a candidate field!**

### More Help Wanted! Dodder Control Using Pursuit®

Several observation trials were conducted this year in seed alfalfa fields to evaluate the efficacy of Pursuit® for dodder control. I had hoped to conduct a replicated field trial, but as often is the case with field research, the dodder didn't cooperate! I did manage to monitor a field that had been treated with Pursuit to control attached dodder, and I am very interested in looking at this in greater detail next season.

I would like to identify candidate fields and grower cooperators NOW so that the fields can be monitored and treated early in the season. If you have a problem field, and would be willing to cooperate in a trial to compare Treflan TR-10®, Prowl®, and various post-emergence treatments involving Pursuit, please let me know.

## Fall Pest Management Practices in Alfalfa Seed Fields to Control Chalcid

Alfalfa grown for seed in California is attacked by a number of pests. These include lygus bugs, seed chalcids, aphids, spider mites, and stink bugs. One of these pests can still be controlled once the crop is harvested: *Seed Chalcids*.

### Seed Chalcid

Chalcid damage varies from year to year and from field to field. In years when we have lower than normal lygus pressure, we often see higher chalcid populations. I've already had a number of calls this year with concerns about heavy chalcid damage in harvested seed lots. To prevent even greater damage next year, control measures must be undertaken in the fall after harvest and during the winter and spring.

During the season, eggs of this tiny wasp are laid inside the developing seeds which the larvae destroy from within. The adult emerges by chewing a hole through both the seed coat and ripened pod, so damage is easily recognized. Chemical control of the chalcid fly is ineffective since eggs, larvae, and pupae develop within the seed and are therefore protected. Late maturing fields usually develop heavier infestations because the insect has a longer period to develop in the crop and more generations may occur. Continuous emergence of the chalcid adult from the seed, and migration from outside sources, make insecticide applications futile.

Field sanitation is the best approach to controlling the chalcid problem, and for the most effective results it should be on an area-wide basis. Fall clean-up practices aimed at breaking the life cycle of this pest are listed below:

- (1) Remove volunteer alfalfa plants and other hosts.
- (2) Prevent seed set on regrowth after harvest, since this offers an ideal over-wintering site for the chalcid.
- (3) Chop or burn the straw to facilitate discing and burying the chalcid-bearing seed.
- (4) Irrigate the stand to rot the chalcid-infested seed and germinate seed shattered during harvest.
- (5) Cover seed hauling trucks to prevent introducing volunteer alfalfa plants along roadways.



For assistance regarding our programs, please contact us.

If you have any questions about the content of this publication or suggestions for topics to be included in later issues, please call.

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