



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

Report of the NAFTA TWG Executive Board Meeting

May 2-3, 2002
Veracruz, Mexico

The Executive Board of the NAFTA Technical Working Group (TWG) on Pesticides met in Veracruz, Mexico, May 2-3, 2002. The meeting was co-chaired by Carlos Santos-Burgoa, Director General de Salud Ambiental of Mexico, Claire Franklin, Executive Director of Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA), and Marcia Mulkey, Director of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Pesticide Programs. Representatives of the Technical Subcommittees and the Secretariat participated along with additional members of Mexico's Comisión Intersecretarial para el Control del Proceso y Uso de Plaguicidas, Fertilizantes y Sustancias Tóxicas (CICOPLAFEST).

Discussion centered on the NAFTA TWG's plan of work for the next five years (2003-2007). A draft five year plan was discussed in light of the submissions by the Industry Working Group (IWG) and the NAFTA Grower Network (NGN), and by the Non-Ag Working Group (NAWG), as well as the outcome of the break out group discussions at the last full TWG meeting in November 2001. The Executive Board approved of the overall draft plan, noting that the basic structure and messages were on target. One of the major points in the discussion was how the TWG wants North America to be perceived by the world in terms of pesticide safety. This will be addressed in the five year plan.

Other areas of discussion included, but were not limited to:

- Public participation/communication
- Activities specifically related to Mexico
- Equal access to pesticide products and markets
- Unfinished work from the first five years of the TWG
- Results based policy
- Ideas for new projects

Presentations:

- Dan Kunkel of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Interregional Research Project Number 4 (IR-4) project presented IR-4 work on minor uses and the successful partnership it has established with EPA for getting minor use pesticides on the market. IR-4 averages 500 new uses per year, representing approximately 100 new maximum residue limits (due to crop groupings). Many of the products are new uses of reduced risk pesticides. In addition, IR-4 has also started working to get some additional chemistries reviewed by coordinating with EPA's re-registration program. There is a great potential for PMRA to benefit from the use of IR-4 and EPA data in order to get

more minor use registrations on the market. Mexico will explore how it can become more involved in the IR-4 process through participation in workshops and sabbaticals to or personnel exchanges with IR-4.

- Luis Alberto Mercado of the Ministry of Health in Mexico gave an update on the US/Mexico worker protection project. Two train-the-trainer pilots were conducted in Morelos and Sinaloa earlier in the year, with great success. There is a high demand for this type of program, and the workgroup will continue to expand and tailor it throughout Mexico.

The meeting ended with an educational site visit to papaya and grapefruit fields, and a poison control center in Veracruz. Participants had an opportunity to observe application techniques, and talk with a small group of papaya growers interested in growing export quality papaya. At the poison control center, participants talked with doctors about their experiences with pesticide poisoning cases, and the challenges their work presents.

The next public meeting of the NAFTA TWG on Pesticides will be held December 5, 2002 in New Orleans. Revised project sheets and work plans for each of the technical subcommittee projects will be distributed in advance of the meeting. Information sessions will be held in the United States and Canada in October in order that stakeholders unable to attend the full TWG meeting will have an opportunity to comment.