



Withdrawal of FTG Applications

The Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) announces that Agrium Inc. has withdrawn its applications to register FTG, a proposed tree seedling inoculant, and the active ingredient *Burkholderia cepacia* (*B. cepacia*) strain Ral-3. This registration was sought from both the PMRA and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Program for Joint Review of Microbials and Semiochemicals of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) Technical Working Group on Pesticides. *Burkholderia cepacia* strain Ral-3 is an active ingredient not included in any previously registered pesticide product in either the United States or Canada.

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The applications were accepted for joint review by the PMRA and the EPA in March 1998. In November 1998, it was announced that there was a need to consider external scientific expertise on concerns that certain strains of *B. cepacia* may affect cystic fibrosis patients.

To accomplish this, several symposia and inter-agency meetings took place regarding the risks and benefits of *B. cepacia*, including a meeting of an EPA Scientific Advisory Panel entitled “*Burkholderia cepacia*: Risk Assessment of a Biopesticide with Affinities to a Human Opportunistic Pathogen.” The majority view of the panel was that a very conservative approach should be taken to the use of *B. cepacia* as a biocontrol agent.

The Reduced Risk Chemicals Joint Review Program, and the Program for Joint Review of Microbials and Semiochemicals are important elements of the international harmonization of pesticide regulation now under way between Canada, the United States and Mexico under NAFTA.

Joint reviews:

- facilitate the registration of alternative pest control tools;
- provide more equal access to pest management tools; and
- increase the efficiency of the registration process.

Although the joint review of FTG did not result in registration of a new microbial pesticide, it did enhance mutual understanding and clarify procedures between the PMRA and the EPA. This will lead to a more efficient and effective joint review process for future microbial pesticide joint reviews.

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