JOINT PESTICIDES FORUM

REPORT ON WORKING GROUP ON GRASSLAND/FORAGE PESTICIDE ISSUES

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Background

• Both the PF and VI have identified the need to improve the handling, storage, use and disposal practice of ‘infrequent’ pesticide users

• Pesticides which are applied to grassland and forage are amongst those most frequently detected as pollutants of water
Aims

• Identify key messages for distinct group
  – Best practice
  – New regulations

• Recommend how to promote change
  – Communication routes
Members

- EBLEX, DairyCo, HCC
- VI, NFU, NFU Cymru, FUW, NE, FSA
- Dow Agrosciences
- AIC, AEA, Basis, Red Tractor
- United Utilities, SW water, Severn Trent water

Table 1
Meetings

• 7\textsuperscript{th} January 2014

• 28\textsuperscript{th} March 2014

• [18\textsuperscript{th} June 2014] – Pesticide Forum

• [30\textsuperscript{th} September 2014] – Working Group
1\textsuperscript{st} mtg

- How many holdings does this affect?
- Could ‘in my backyard’ be used to display areas with pesticide issues?
- How do the various assurance schemes deal with this?
- Is there any work on how pesticides “behave” in grassland systems?
- What is happening in Wales?

Appendix A
1st mtg – audience

• Producers:
  – With grass and forage crops for livestock
    • Need to think about crops for biodigesters
  – Who have not previously engaged with VI messages
  – Who occasionally use products

• Contractors
1<sup>st</sup> mtg – audience

- Professional advisers, especially grassland consultants
- Smallholders
- Landowners with pony paddocks via CLA or British Horse Society

- The activity covers grass and forage crops (maize, whole-crop cereals, fodder beet)
  - Maize and new leys – highest risk
1st mtg – main messages

• Best practice, especially in yard

• Importance of contractors
  – What is best for your enterprise? With financials
  – Who is a good contractor?

• Regulation changes
  – City and Guilds have a training course for “grandfathers” wanting to get the certificate
1st mtg – main messages

- How to deal with unwanted pesticides
  - Disposal amnesty (with chemical regulation directorate (CRD)?)
- Impact of on-farm practices on water quality
- Weed wiper
  - Very difficult to get product approval through CRD
  - Currently only licensed product is round-up
- Regulatory barriers
1st mtg – comm plan

- Product guide
- Leaflets
- Articles, with case studies
- Section on VI website
- Local information
- Messages tagged on to other meetings
- Specific training for merchants
- Disposal amnesty
2\textsuperscript{nd} mtg

- Confirmed activity at Grassland and Muck
  - 21/22 May 2014
- Planning activity around 26 November 2014
  - Case studies
  - Press briefing
  - Visit to water treatment plant?
Activity

• EBLEX and DairyCo to mail out
  – Around 35,000 levy payers

Important change of title
- From “Are you ready for SUD?”
Activity

- EBLEX and DairyCo to mail out handbook
  – Around 35,000 levy payers
Activity – G&M 14

- Distribution of leaflets
Activity – G&M 14

- Distribution of leaflets
  - Agrovista UK Ltd
  - Dow Agrosciences
  - Headland Agrochemicals
  - Kingshay
  - Mole Valley Farmers
  - Natural England
  - NIAB-TAG
  - Wynnstay
Activity – G&M 14

- Briefing on stand by Jon Harrington
  - Short film on DairyCo website
  - Aimed at advisers and producers
  - With banners
Activity – G&M 14

• Survey
  – To win handheld sprayer from Micron
    – 16 questions to gather baseline data
  – 73 responses

Appendix E
Survey results

1. What is your MAIN farming role?

- Farmer: 61.3%
- Contractor: 18.7%
- Farm Worker: 13.3%
- Other: 6.7%
2. What type of farm/farmers are you involved with?

- **Beef**: 33.6%
- **Sheep**: 30.0%
- **Dairy**: 17.3%
- **Arable**: 12.7%
- **Other**: 6.4%
3. How would you describe your farm?

- Lowland: 62.3%
- Upland: 19.5%
- Hill: 7.8%
- Other: 10.4%
4. Do you do any contract spraying or spray for neighbours?

- Yes: 80.0%
- No: 20.0%

5. If yes, which crops do you spray?

- Maize: 48.6%
- Grass: 27.0%
- Arable: 16.2%
- Pony Paddocks: 5.4%
- Other: 2.7%
Survey results

6. Do you use weedkillers on your farm?

- Yes: 90%
- No: 10%

7. If you do not use weedkillers on your farm, why not?

- Organic: 31.6%
- Weeds not an issue: 26.3%
- Weeds present but at low levels: 42.1%
- Other: 0.0%
8. Do you have any qualifications to use weedkillers?

- Grandfather rights: 41.3%
- PA1 & PA2: 28.0%
- PA1 & PA6: 18.7%
- New Grandfather Certificate: 8.0%
- None: 0.0%
- Other: 4.0%

9. Were you born on or before 31/12/1964?

- Yes: 70%
- No: 30%
10. If you use weedkillers, how frequently do you use them?

- Regularly: 29.8%
- Frequently: 52.6%
- Occasionally: 12.3%
- Rarely: 5.3%
11. If you use weedkillers, how do you apply them?
12. If you use weedkillers, where do you get MOST of your advice on what spray to use?

- 55.6% Farming Press
- 23.8% Feed Rep
- 0.0% Farm Advisor or Agronomist
- 6.3% Country Store Adviser
- 4.8% Levy Board - HCC/Dairycot EBLEX
- 4.8% Spray Contractor
- Other
13. Are you aware that legislation affecting grandfather rights/sprayer qualifications is changing?

14. Are you aware that legislation requiring testing of field sprayers (every 5 years) has been introduced?
Survey results

15. How will you meet the new legal requirements (sprayer/testing/operator) qualifications?

- 50.7%: Get trained and have my sprayer tested
- 28.4%: Use a contractor or local farmer
- 16.4%: Stop using any sprays
- 0.0%: Don't know
- 4.5%: Other

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16. Are you aware that weedkillers used to control grassland weeds can be found in rivers and lakes?
Survey summary - I

• Over 40% of respondents had no qualifications
  – Plus nearly 20% on grandfather’s rights

• Around 50% of respondents use weed killers once a year/every 1-2 years
  – Knapsnack, boom sprayers
Survey summary - II

- Over 50% use agronomist or adviser
- Awareness of changes in qualifications, sprayer testing and water courses high

- Over 50% of respondents will get or have been trained
  – No one will stop using sprays
Survey summary - III

• Focus on communication on how to get trained

• Focus on agronomists

• Focus on how to deal with contractors
Recommendations

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– Baseline survey and data mining
– Working group continues
– More focused communications