

Authority revokes approvals for fungicide quintozene

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The Environmental Risk Management Authority has revoked the approvals for the fungicide quintozene, due to dioxin impurities.

Quintozene is used commercially on seedlings, bulbs and recreational turf in New Zealand.

The decision to review the substance came after dioxin impurities were found in quintozene products in Australia at levels that may have presented health risks to workers who frequently applied them.

Dioxins are on the list of substances covered by the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. As a party to the Convention, New Zealand is committed to reducing releases of dioxin to the environment.

Only one quintozene-containing product, Terraclor 75 WP, is registered in New Zealand.

Importer Nufarm took steps to ensure no new stock was imported or sold during the reassessment and stocks are believed to be minimal. ERMA New Zealand Hazardous Substances General Manager Andrea Eng congratulated Nufarm on its responsible approach.

In making its decision, the Authority found that the health and environmental risks associated with the use of quintozene, based on both the active ingredient and the dioxin contaminant, outweighed the benefits of its use.

The decision to discontinue the use of quintozene is also consistent with New Zealand's commitment to the Stockholm Convention.

The Authority revoked the approvals for import and manufacture, effective immediately, with any unused stock to be disposed of within three months.

Arrangements are under way to safely handle and dispose of unused stock.

Importer and supplier Nufarm will accept unopened containers of quintozene which it will return to the US manufacturer, while rural recycling programme Agrecovery has committed to collecting and disposing of any surplus stock. Agrecovery can be contacted on 0800 247 326. Some charges may apply for collection and disposal.

For more information call Nufarm on 0800 683 276.

