IR-4 Program

REGISTERING PESTICIDES FOR SPECIALTY PLANTS

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Abstract

The IR-4 Program assists growers of native plants who need special pesticide labeling for their crops.

KEYWORDS: Label, native plants

Growers of specialty plants, including many species of native plants, often find they lack chemical or biopesticide pest control options as part of an overall integrated pest management plan. Generally, specialty crops, aren't listed on labels because the labeling process is expensive for chemical companies, and minor crops with limited potential for financial return in terms of product sold, are ignored. In 1988, the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act was amended to require all pesticide uses registered before 1984 be re-registered, and in conjunction with the Food Quality Protection Act requires that all pesticides have label registration. Using pesticides in methods not listed on the label is unlawful, and if damage occurs to your crop, you lack means for settlement with the chemical company.

If you have a pesticide or biopesticide that may be useful for producing specific plants but lacks the appropriate label, the IR-4 program can assist in obtaining a label. For each pesticide, applicants complete an IR-4 Pesticide Request Form (see ordering information below) which can simply be filled out by hand. Any number of crops can be included on this form with an addendum sheet added if needed. Your name, address, and telephone number must be included.

Upon receipt of the form, IR-4 promptly assigns it a Pesticide Request Number and contacts the agricultural chemical company to determine if they will use research data developed by IR-4 for a national label registration. If the company agrees, a protocol is developed by IR-4 and research can begin.

If you want to help conduct the research and follow the protocol, it can speed up the process. The ornamental researchers, including state and federal personnel, are limited to about 500 projects per year. Data is submitted to the IR-4 ornamentals manager who compiles the data collected and then submits it to the agricultural chemical company for submission to EPA. IR-4 provides a supporting letter to indicate that this data was collected using the proper protocol. The time line for a new registration from the time of request until the issue of the national label registration for an ornamental varies extensively, but anticipate a two to three y period before an ornamental label registration is available.

The IR-4 Project was set up to provide pest control tools for minor crop or specialty crop producers. Today the responsibility is to develop data for national pesticide and biopesticide label registrations. This research includes developing data for use in the production of floral, forestry, nursery, Christmas tree, and turf production. Data is also developed for pest control registrations for the commercial landscape, interior plantscape, and tissue culture. More than 100,000 varieties of ornamental crops are grown in the US today. Research is conducted on bacteriacides, fungicides, herbicides, insecticides, molluscicides, nematicides, plant growth regulators, and rodenticides.

The IR-4 Project is coordinated and headquartered at Rutgers University in North Brunswick, New Jersey, with 4 Regional Coordinators located in Geneva, New York (Cornell University), Gainesville, Florida (University of Florida), East Lansing, Michigan (Michigan State University), and Davis, California (University of California-Davis). Each state has an IR-4 representative who provides input for project prioritization. The IR-4 program is funded by the USDA Agricultural Research Service and Cooperative States Education and Extension Service—state agricultural extension stations (SAES) of US land grant universities provide financial and other support services.

For more information and pesticide request forms, please contact:

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