



## LEGISLATIVE BANS OF PESTICIDE PRODUCTS

### BACKGROUND

Several bills have been introduced to prohibit the use of pesticide products in New York State. These proposals threaten to create significant harm to New York's agriculture and green industry and ignore the science-based decisions rendered by the NYS Departments of Health and Environmental Conservation.

The following bills would ban the use of one or more pesticides in New York

- S223 (Hoylman) bans glyphosate use until a taskforce study examines safety and alternatives
- S225 (Hoylman) bans glyphosate and products containing glyphosate
- S1074 (Hoylman) bans atrazine, metalaxyl, neonicotinoids
- S2156/ A2477 (Kaminsky/ Englebright) bans use of chlorpyrifos
- A732 (Rosenthal, L.) bans glyphosate in parks, playgrounds, and picnic areas
- S182 (Serrano) bans glyphosate in parks, playgrounds, and picnic areas

Before pesticides can be used in the United States they must go through an extensive evaluation and registration process by the United States Environmental Protection Agency. New York is only one of two states that conducts their own pesticide review process after federal registration. The Department of Environmental Conservation is charged with reviewing and registering pesticide products before they can be used in New York (Article 33, EnCon Law). The extensive review process requires determinations of no threats to water quality, wildlife and humans. The review and evaluation process involves experts from the NYS Water Resources Institute, the Department of Health, the Division of Wildlife, in addition to the experts from DEC's Bureau of Pesticides.

The economic impact of pesticide bans to New York's green industry and agriculture could be devastating. Five examples are the cabbage maggot, tick management, white grubs in turf, annual bluegrass weevil in golf turf, and invasive species of insects attacking ash and maple trees.

On Long Island there is no highly effective alternative to chlorpyrifos to treat cabbage maggot, a destructive insect of cabbage, Brussel sprouts, radishes and other related crops.

Chlorpyrifos is also used in rotational programs with pyrethroids on golf courses to control ticks that spread Lyme disease and other tick borne diseases.

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The annual bluegrass weevil is a major pest on golf course turf normally treated with the pyrethroid class of insecticides. Unfortunately the adult insect is building resistance to this class of materials and golf courses are now relying on chlorpyrifos to control the insect in its adult stage.

Imidacloprid, which is included in the neonicotinoid class of insecticides, is widely used for the control of white grubs on golf courses, sports fields, and lawns. In certain areas of New York State, such as Long Island, there is no good alternative to control this destructive insect. Imidacloprid is also an excellent product for treating maple trees for the invasive Asian Long Horned Beetle and in treating ash trees for a newly introduced invasive insect, the Emerald Ash Borer.

Brendan Quirion, an invasive species specialist with The Nature Conservancy, the largest conservation advocacy group in the world said, "As it stands, glyphosate is really the best tool we have for fighting many species of invasive plants when evaluated through an integrated pest management approach."

Banning a pesticide doesn't mean it isn't going to be replaced with another product. It is also important to weigh the possible alternative products that could be used in replacement and determine if such a ban will do more harm than good.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Resist the temptation to impose politics over science. Legislative bans of pesticide products, reviewed and approved by DEC, usurp science-based policy, set a bad precedent for New York State and place agriculture and horticulture industries at a significant competitive disadvantage to competition from other states and countries.

IPM's use of best management practices (BMPs) for pest control in homes, commercial and public spaces, parks, golf courses, landscapes, farms and gardens provides for science-based state of the art pest control practices which may not involve pesticides. Nevertheless, pesticides must remain part of the IPM "toolbox" as they can be the best practice for specific pest control situations.