



COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL AND
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES
AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
TELEPHONE: (530) 754-8378 / 752-7010
FAX: (530) 754-8379

WESTERN REGION PEST MANAGEMENT CENTER
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL TOXICOLOGY
ONE SHIELDS AVENUE
DAVIS, CALIFORNIA 95616-8588
<http://www.wrpmc.ucdavis.edu>

November 21, 2005

Dr. Teung F. Chin
USDA/ARS/OPMP
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 3871-South Bldg., Mail Stop 0315
Washington, DC 20250-3191

Dear Teung,

This letter is in response to your request on November 18 regarding the use of malathion on dates. According to your letter the USEPA may have drinking water concerns.

Your questions are: What are the application rates, including average and maximum rates for dates? What is the number of acres of dates treated with malathion?

Data from the California Department of Pesticide Regulation's Pesticide Use Report for 2003 are as follows.

Forty-six fields totaling 1,846 acres were treated with 9,063 lb ai of malathion. This represents 35 percent of the state's acreage of dates. The number of harvested acres of dates in California in 2003 was 5,276 according to the California Agricultural Commissioners' report put out by NASS. The median application rate was 2.5 lb ai/ac. The rates ranged from 0.88 to 5.00 lb ai/ac. The median number of applications per treated field was 2.0, with a range of 1-5 applications per field.

All applications of malathion to dates were with a 5 percent dust formulation applied by ground equipment. All applications were made from August 9, 2003 to October 20, 2003, except one application on November 11, 2003.

I am uncertain of the drinking water concerns, however all dates are flood irrigated from the Coachella or All-American canal system. There are no streams that provide drinking water in date growing areas.

This use of 5 percent malathion dust is critical to the date industry. This formulation is the only dry insecticide registered for dates that controls several insect species late in the season. Dates cannot tolerate any moisture during this time. Without malathion 5 dust, it would be very difficult to maintain the economic viability of this industry.

Dr. Teung F. Chin
November 21, 2005
Page 2

If you have any further questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Melnicoe". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small flourish at the end of the last name.

Rick Melnicoe