

Summary of the 4/28/10 Conference Call re: OMRI issues prepared by Lebelles Hicks, PhD Maine Board of Pesticides Control

Following a request from the State of Maine, EPA Region I hosted a conference call at 2:00 pm on April 28th at 2:00 pm to discuss Organic Materials Research Institutes (OMRI) pesticide issues. The participants were Lebelles Hicks, toxicologist Maine Board of Pesticides Control, Kan Tham, Ray Putnam, Andrea Szylvian, Rob Koethe from Region I and Chris Pfeifer, Mary McDonnell, Yvette Hellyer, and Mickey Post from EPA Headquarters.

These issues came to light last fall, when Lebelles was attempting to identify pesticide products with “**DANGER**” signal words on their labels approved for use in organic agriculture. The strategy she used was to evaluate the lists of OMRI 3rd party certified products. The issues identified were:

- The difficulty in obtaining labels and determining registration status based on the current format of the list (Brand name, company and general use category)
- Question of unregistered products being sold in the US including Neem containing products listed as fertilizers
- Question of if presence of the product on the OMRI was equal to offering for sale

Proposed Resolutions

EPA will request that OMRI publish EPA numbers and identify 25(b) products on their lists.

Regarding pesticide products not registered by EPA being used in the US, it was decided to address this on a case by case basis, if a state lead agency finds an unregistered organic product being offered for sale or in use, they should contact their Regional EPA office and it will be dealt with as any other non-registered pesticide. This would include the Neem products which are listed as fertilizers.

The question of OMRI listing being equal to offering the product for sale was addressed in that since OMRI is not getting a commission on the sale, it is not a sale.