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A REVIEW OF THE STATUS OF BIRD MANAGEMENT PRODUCTS AND DEVICES IN THE UNITED STATES

Charles W. Areson ¹

INTRODUCTION

Commercial urban /industrial structural pest bird control is approaching a time of crisis. Several long-standing toxicants that have been used as a major part of pest bird control programs are either suspended, at risk of suspension, or have had their production terminated by the manufacturer. "Environmental groups" are up in arms about the use and misuse of pesticides. Lawsuits have been filed to stop the use of some products, and political pressure has brought about reviews of some pesticide products on both the state and federal levels. EPA has seemed to have a "get tough" policy in its reregistration guidelines, which are causing some pesticide manufacturers to decide to not support reregistration of some long standing pesticide products. Testing required to meet EPA reregistration guidelines could go into the tens of millions of dollars for some widely used agricultural products.

FROM WHERE COMETH OUR HELP ?

Current cost estimates for the "average" new product development through EPA registration run from seven to ten million dollars and up, and development times run from seven to ten years. The market for avicide products in the United States is very limited, and major manufacturers and producers who have this type of research funds are not willing to spend them if they are not firmly convinced that they will get a good rate of return on their investment. Therefore, research and development of new avicide products is limited primarily to products developed by or in cooperation with the U. S. Department of Agriculture Animal Damage Control laboratories.

USDA /APHIS /ADC research, however, is limited by congressional mandate to work on agricultural and public health related products excluding urban rodent control. Their funding is also very limited because of federal budget restraints, so we cannot expect significant assistance from them in developing new avian control products. They are willing, however, to share information with the private sector about any chemicals or products that they feel might have some promise for development. The private sector company would be responsible for final formulation and product development and EPA registration. They are willing to help as they are able, but the funding for final developmental work must come from the private sector, and not the government.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Illinois

The State of Illinois began a voluntary permit system in 1985 in response to an incident of nontarget raptor kill caused by a bird eradication project at the Commonwealth Edison Sanchris Generating Station just south of Springfield. This program was conducted by the Rid-A-Bird company themselves using their fenthion product. This incident made news nationwide, including The Wall Street Journal. The following two winters (86-87 & 87-88) The Rid-A-Bird company had reported secondary kills of raptors as a result of a bird control project at the Marathon Refinery in Robinson, Illinois. This last winter also, there has been a reported raptor secondary near the Marathon facility where there is an ongoing Rid-A-Bird project. Work in the state has been somewhat restricted because of these incidents.

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Strychnine

The use of strychnine has been the target of a lawsuit because of secondary kill on protected and endangered non-target species. An injunction is now in place that prohibits all above ground use. A hearing has been held on the matter in November, 1988, and we are still awaiting a decision. This affects the use of pigeon and sparrow control products containing strychnine, and the decision could potentially go either way.

Endrin

Rid-A-Bird, the Iowa firm that has the only federally registered avian contact toxicants, has discontinued the production and sale of its oldest product, Rid-A-Bird Control Liquid with the active ingredient endrin. This is the only U.S. label remaining with endrin as the active ingredient. Current registrations are valid through 1989.

Fenthion

The Mobay Chemical Company, manufacturer of fenthion, the active ingredient in some 500 pesticide products including Rid-A-Bird 1100, has notified EPA of its intention to not supply the reregistration data called for in the U.S. reregistration guidelines because of their prohibitive expense. This means that unless Rid-A-Bird can get a minor use exemption for its Rid-A-Bird 1100 Perch Solution, that label will be lost. Our 24.c. label on BCF#1 in Hawaii faces the same fate unless a minor use exemption can be obtained.

Illinois and Fenthion -- In the State of Illinois, the Department of Conservation requested in the March Inter-agency meeting that the avicide uses of fenthion in the state of Illinois be banned because of nontarget kill, primarily of raptors, over the last few years. A public informational meeting was held April 13, 1989 in Springfield, IL, to discuss the future of fenthion as an avicide in Illinois. Many individuals from several groups were heard. Continuing meetings and discus-

sions have been held, and the outcome is still in question, although it looks as if the anti-fenthion push may have been stopped.

WHAT'S NEW

Alpha-Chlorolose

New products are beginning to come on the scene. Denver is continuing to develop *alpha-chlorolose* as a animal drug (feed based) as a non-lethal capture technique for waterfowl relocation. Current FDA approval is being sought. Other uses for the product may be contemplated in the future.

Methyl Anthranilate

Denver is also continuing to work with *methyl anthranilate* for use as a taste repellent in feedlot bunkers, and as a repellent (mode of action still undetermined) as a waterfowl repellent for turf. Dimethyl anthranilate has previously been tested, and several papers have been done on it, but the cost differential is significant enough to warrant the new work.

Tactile Repellent

The former U.S. distributor of HOTFOOT BIRD REPELLENT, now called THE EXPORT GROUP, has begun a marketing program for their new U.S. manufactured repellent called "ADIOS" Bird Repellent. It will be accompanied by their new aerosol sealant, "SEAL COAT", and will, according to company literature, carry the same two year guarantee as does HOTFOOT. HOTFOOT now has new U.S. distributors. Ph 1-800-247-3766.

Bird Barrier

Barrier Specialties has come up with a bird deterrent device to compete with Nixalite and Cats Claw. It is a spiral stainless wire on a mounting strip that the manufacturer claims costs less, install easier, is almost invisible, and won't harm installer or trap debris. Ph 1-800-44BIRDS.

Detection Device

A Louisville group has come up with a detection device to trigger frightening or recording equipment when the bird or birds come into the area of the detector. This new device may provide great promise to the techniques of bird frightening by reducing the unnecessary use of the hazing devices and thereby minimizing acclimation.

CPT

A submission is being made this fall to EPA for a regular Section III registration by Bird Management Research, Inc. for BCF-7000 (a CPT based jel formulation toxicant) for pigeon and starling control, indoor use only. Expansion of the label to include outdoor use in urban and industrial sites will probably follow within the next year or two. Canadian registration will be sought as soon as U.S. registration application has been completed and filed.

Denver continues its work to develop CPT as a blackbird roost toxicant. Some EUP work has been done in the south, but EPA has refused to grant an EUP for the sunflower related work in North Dakota. Data gathering is continuing.

CPTH (DRC-1339)

Bird Management Research, Inc. has also applied for 24C. label for BCF-700 BAIT CONCENTRATE (Starlicide Concentrate equivalent) to the Illinois Department of Agriculture for the control of pigeons and starlings in urban areas and industrial sites, on buildings and structures not located in urban areas and industrial sites (bridges, towers, farms buildings etc.), and around airports. 24C applications for this product for other states are anticipated. The company is trying to develop a stabilized end-use bait with at least a 2 year shelf life. As soon as this is done, they are planning to request a federal Section III label for the bait. Marketing of the end-use product is anticipated to be nationwide in the U.S. as well as into Canada.

Aquaculture

The enterprising staff at the Glenn County Mosquito Abatement District in Willows, California have developed a method to help prevent depredation at their mosquitofish ponds. The method involves the use of electrified fencing surrounding the ponds as well as electrified overwiring. This technique has provided nearly 100% elimination of predation by the common and snowy egrets that had previously been wiping out their efforts to raise the mosquitofish for use in their mosquito control efforts. This technique looks very promising for use in bird control in areas of aquaculture. For further information contact them at P. O. Box 1156, Willows, CA 95988. Ph (916) 934-4025.

Habitat Modification

DWRC personnel have been looking into the use of habitat modification as a means of reducing summer blackbird roost in the sunflower growing areas of the northern plains. They are seeking to find out if increasing the open water areas of the cattail marshes will increase the use of these area by waterfowl, disperse the nesting starling flocks, and therefore decrease the problem of losses of sunflower production to blackbirds.

NEW FUNDING

An "Avian Control Product Development Fund" should be established to provide "research and development grants" to companies that could demonstrate both (1) a financial need and (2) a new or modified product which the administering board would feel was both needed and had a high likelihood of success. These "grants" would be provided with the stipulation that if the product reached the market, that twice the amount of the "grant" would be paid back into the fund at a rate of 2% of the gross product sales. This rate of repayment could be varied by mutual consent.

In discussing this idea of an "Avian Control Product Development Fund" with Mr. Harvey Gold, Executive Director of the

National Pest Control Association, he has indicated a personal interest in the fund, and has said he would like to take the idea to the Executive Board of the Association. They are a group that not only have an insight to the need of the pest control industry, but they are fully aware of the problems and procedures needed to get a product approved and to market, and I believe they would be an excellent group to administer the fund. They could provide valuable assistance in assuring development of new and innovative solutions to bird management problems. Dr. Russ Reidinger, Director of the USDA /APHIS /ADC Denver Wildlife Research Center also indicated to me that he thought that this type of fund could provide much needed help in the development of new products. It might be possible to have this fund be a part of the NPCA administered Phillip Speer Research Fund. Administrators could work closely with the USDA IR-4 people as well as the with Denver Wildlife Research Center.

COMING GUIDE

A Guide to Bird Management Products, Pesticides, Devices and Techniques should be available by spring 1990 from Bird Management Research, Inc., Box 159, Clinton, IN 47842-0159. It will be in loose leaf format, and will contain listings of products, devices, pesticides, and techniques for both structural and urban bird control as well as agricultural bird management. It will also contain a list of manufacturers and distributors. The cost of the Guide has not yet been determined.

Apology

The author apologizes to any individual or company whose new product, device, or technique has been overlooked. Situations and circumstances mentioned herein are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge at the time the paper was prepared. For any errors, omissions, or oversights I sincerely apologize.