

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2008

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: APVMA 01

Division/Agency: Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Topic: Permits Products Containing Melamine in Victoria

Hansard Page: 81 (20/10/08)

Senator Colbeck asked:

Senator COLBECK—My information is that there are some permitted uses for products containing melamine in Victoria. Can you confirm whether that is the case?

Dr Bennett-Jenkins—Not that I am aware of. As I said, cyromazine, which is the main chemical that is of concern with regard to having melamine as a breakdown product, is not registered for horticultural uses. But perhaps I could take that question on notice to get back to you on whether there are other pesticides that may be permitted under permit that have a similar predisposition to break down into melamine.

Answer:

- As described at the estimates hearing, melamine is a metabolite of cyromazine. Cyromazine is registered in Australia as a sheep blowfly treatment, for use in feedlots for control of nuisance flies and in home garden products for use against fleas in dog and cat kennels/bedding, used around farm buildings, veterinary surgeries etc. A list of registered products is attached for information. There are no registered products for use in horticultural situations. There are no off-label uses approved by APVMA for use in horticultural situations.
- Another potential source of melamine is from the herbicide prometryn, which is registered in Australia. Prometryn is registered for early use in carrots, celery, chickpeas, cotton, potatoes, pastures and seed crops. Like cyromazine, prometryn when ingested by animals can result in melamine as a metabolite.
- Melamine residues would not be present in fruit and vegetable crops that are treated with prometryn because the herbicide needs to be ingested by animals to breakdown to melamine. Therefore there are no registered or permitted pesticides that would lead to melamine residues in domestically produced fruits and vegetables.