

# INDUSTRY TASK FORCE II ON 2,4-D RESEARCH DATA

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## News Release

### Health Canada Finds 2,4-D Can Be Used Safely

*OTTAWA, May 16, 2008* – Health Canada’s Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) concluded its re-evaluation of the popular herbicide 2,4-dichlorophenoxyacetic acid (2,4-D), finding that the herbicide can be used safely according to label directions for a variety of lawn, turf and agricultural applications.

In issuing the decision, the PMRA stated in its Information Note, “Health Canada also consulted an independent Science Advisory Panel comprised of government and university experts/researchers in toxicology, epidemiology and biology. The Panel agreed with Health Canada’s assessment that 2,4-D can be used safely when used according to label directions, with some uses requiring additional protective measures.”

<http://www.pmra-arla.gc.ca/english/pdf/infonotes/InfoNote-2,4-D-rvd2008-11-eng.pdf>

Jim Gray, executive director of the Industry Task Force II on 2,4-D Research Data, said, “After reviewing an unprecedented depth of scientific data and expert panel reviews regarding the impact 2,4-D may have on children, adults, animals and the environment, Health Canada determined the herbicide meets all of Canada’s pesticide health and safety regulations, which are among the toughest and most stringent in the world.”

“These most recent findings by the PMRA are consistent with previous decisions made by authorities including the World Health Organization, European Commission, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and recent studies by the U.S. National Cancer Institute that deem 2,4-D to be a valuable and useful herbicide that does not pose human health or environmental risks when used according to label instructions,” Gray added.

This conclusion supports the 2005 and 2007 draft assessments issued by PMRA which found that 2,4-D can be used safely on lawn, turf, agricultural, forestry and industrial sites, when label directions are followed.

Health Canada’s decision and other resources pertaining to 2,4-D may be found at:

<http://www.pmra-arla.gc.ca/english/consum/2,4-D-e.html>

For more information about 2,4-D, visit <http://www.24d.org> or call 1-800-345-5109.

## **About 2,4-D**

2,4-D, one of the most widely used herbicides in North America and worldwide, is applied to crops such as wheat, corn, rice, soybeans, potatoes, sugar cane, pome fruits, stone fruits and nuts. It is also a component of herbicides used to protect turf grass from weeds and environmentally sensitive areas from invasive species.

A 2006 Assessment of the Economic and Related Benefits to Canada of Phenoxy Herbicides concluded that loss of 2,4-D in the agricultural sector would cost producers \$321 million and the industrial infrastructure sector about \$17.5 million. Loss of effective weed control for the home and professional turf goes beyond strict costs, (affecting the value of property resale by percent); but more importantly reducing the effectiveness of turf to filter pollutants, prevent soil erosion, improve water infiltration, moderate temperatures, and reduce noise.

## **About the Task Force**

The Industry Task Force II on 2,4-D Research Data was formed to fund the new research required by both the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Canadian Pest Management Regulatory Agency under their current pesticide re-registration/re-evaluation programs. The Task Force does not conduct any research, it simply must fund it. The actual research, under both U.S. and Canadian law, must be done by GLP qualified laboratories. The companies making up the Task Force are Dow AgroSciences (U.S.), Nufarm Ltd. (Australia) and Agro-Gor Corp., a U.S. corporation jointly owned by Atanor, S.A. (Argentina) and PBI-Gordon Corp. (U.S.).

## **Highlights of 2,4-D Herbicide's 63-year History**

- 1945 – U.S. Patent No 2,390,941 is issued for 2,4-D to plant physiologist Dr. Franklin D. Jones of the American Chemical Paint Company.
- 1946 – 2,4-D is registered for use in Canada on crops and turf grass.
- 1964 – 54 million pounds of 2,4-D produced as farmers and homeowners alike discover the benefits of effective weed control. Studies at the time found that weeds typically destroyed 30 – 35 percent of crop yields.
- 1970 – Plant scientists continue to find new uses for 2,4-D in protecting crops, such as plant growth regulator on potatoes and weed control for blueberries, cranberries, raspberries and strawberries.

- 1980 – Re-evaluation by the Canadian government of 2,4-D announced in October.
- 1986 – EPA issues preliminary notification of Special Review.
- 1988 – Beginning of reregistration data development by the 2,4-D Task Force and review by EPA.
- 1996 – World Health Organization completes its toxicological review of 2,4-D and determines the compound does not present a risk to human health.
- 2001 – European Commission completes its toxicological and environmental assessment of 2,4-D and states “...that the plant protection products containing 2,4-D will fulfill the safety requirements laid down in the Directive 91/414/EEC.”
- 2004 – The Henry Ford organization in Dearborn, Michigan declares 2,4-D one of the 75 most important innovations in the previous 75 years.
- 2005 – Health Canada’s Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) issues “Proposed Acceptability for Continued Registration” and determines 2,4-D can be used safely on lawn and turf when label directions are followed. Release of proposed decision provides for public comment and input.
- 2005 – EPA releases 2,4-D Reregistration Eligibility Decision (RED). EPA’s review of human health and environmental data concludes there is no additional evidence that would implicate 2,4-D as a cause of cancer and it does not pose an unacceptable risk to human health when product instructions are followed.
- 2007 – PMRA issues the “Proposed Acceptability for Continued Registration” of 2,4-D in the agriculture, forestry, industrial and aquatic sites, and determines that use in the above-mentioned terrestrial sites is acceptable for continued registration.
- 2007 – EPA determines the existing data do not support a conclusion that links human cancer to 2,4-D exposure and issues “Decision Not to Initiate a Special Review” after more than 21 years of research and agency review.
- 2008 – PMRA issues final re-evaluation decision on 2,4-D and determines it is safe to use according to label directions.