

## New BASF termiticide

BASF has expanded its range of global pest products with the launch of its chlorfenapyr-based termiticide in France and Japan. BASF introduced the product as Mythic termiticide in France in autumn 2000 and as Stealth in Japan in early 2001. In the USA, the termiticide carries the name Phantom and is being used by termite control professionals under an Experimental Use Permit project. Registration of Phantom in the US is expected in late 2001. The termiticide's active ingredient, chlorfenapyr, is classified under the family pyrroles. Chlorfenapyr is non-repellent. Termites will not be able to detect the ingredient in the soil and will enter the treated zone, picking up a toxic dose.

## Fungicide to control Oomycetes

Ishihara Sangyo Kaisha Ltd of Japan has developed Ranman (cyazofamid), a novel fungicide for controlling a wide variety of Oomycetes and Plasmodiophoromycetes. The product offers good resistance to late blight in potatoes and tomatoes, and downy mildew in melon and grapevine at very low application rates. The product showed no phytotoxicity during registration trials. It has a good environmental, ecotoxicological and toxicological profile. The firm has submitted applications for registration in the USA, Asia and Europe. It is planned to expand the product's applications to include problems such as onion downy mildew, Chinese cabbage downy mildew, watermelon brown root and sweet pepper *Phytophthora*. In Japan, the product will be offered as a 100 g active ingredient/litre suspension.

## Fighting invasive weeds

Scientists at CSIRO in Australia are conducting research on biological control of a number of invasive weeds:

- The beetle *Deuterocampta quadrijuga* to control blue heliotrope
- The South African leaf-rolling moth (*Tortrix* spp.) to control bitou bush
- The rust fungus *Puccinia myrsiphylli* to control bridal creeper (*Asparagus asparagoides*)

Similarly USDA-ARS scientists in the USA

are investigating the use of fungi to control similar troublesome weeds:

- *Septoria epambrosiae* to control ragweed (*Ambrosia artemisiifolia*)
- *Harknessia lythrii* to control purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)
- Strains of the sicklepod fungus (*Myrothecium verrucaria*) to control kudzu and morning glories

## First non-toxic rat bait

Natrocell is launching the world's first rodenticide non-toxic to all but rodents. The cellulose-based material is digested by all animals except rodents; pathogenic bacteria are produced in their gut and cause death in 4 to 10 days. Two products are being marketed in the UK – EradiRat and EradiMouse. The bait is made from natural vegetable material and cannot contaminate food, cause secondary poisoning or be subject to resistance.

## BASF launches new herbicide family

BASF has approval for PicoPro herbicide (picolinafen + pendimethalin). Picolinafen is a new molecule from the aryloxy-picolinamides family from which further herbicides are expected to flow. It gives broad weed control in cereals with particular strength against cleavers.

The company claims that the mixture shows true synergism in its weed control; pendimethalin's control of cleavers is speeded up from 22 to 6 days.

## Potatoes

### Potato cyst nematode control

Workers at Amsterdam University have shown that the use of solano-eclipin A, a compound released by germinating potato tubers, causes potato cyst nematodes to break their hibernation early and therefore starve to death in the absence of their potato hosts. The workers have managed to synthesise the complex molecule and have shown it is effective when applied to fallow fields.

### Purple potatoes resistant to blight?

Carlo Leifert of the University of Newcastle has cultivated a purple potato from

Hungary and shown that it is tolerant of attack by seven different strains of *Phytophthora infestans* (the causal agent of potato late blight). The work is the UK's contribution to the European Union's £3.5 million research programme 'Blight-Mop'.

## Nematode resistance

USDA-ARS researchers have developed a new potato which is resistant to the golden nematode (*Glooderia rostochensis*). The new potatoes are under test at its New York and Pennsylvania Research Stations.

## Biocontrol of colorado beetles

A glow bacterium, *Photobacterium luminescens*, is being tested by USDA-ARS researchers as a possible biocontrol candidate against the Colorado beetle.

## Snippets

... Malaysia's Purnama Pesona Sdn. Bhd. has launched insect-repellent air fresheners. The key ingredient of Repel Roach and Repel Mosquito, is reported to be lemon grass, together with natural herb extracts. The products, developed by the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia with Global Herba (Perak), are claimed to be non-toxic and environmentally friendly.

... USDA ARS researchers at Albany have examined the oils extracted from 16 spices and medicinal plants for effects against rice weevil (*Sitophilus oryzae*). Methone (extracted from Japanese mint, *Mentha arvensis*) was identified as the most active component and is undergoing further evaluation as a safe, effective but non-persistent fumigant for stored grain.

## Artificial cows against tsetse

Artificial cows, developed in the 1980s by researchers, including scientists from the University of Greenwich, UK, have successfully eradicated sleeping sickness and nagana (transmitted by tsetse flies) from parts of Africa. The flies are attracted to the cows using kairomones to mimic the smell of real cattle. The fake cattle are impregnated with insecticides. With only 4 artificial cows needed per square kilometre to ensure effective pest control, the use of insecticide is far more targeted than conventional aerial or ground spraying.