



NAFTA TWG Five-Year Strategy 2016 – 2021

Message from the Executive Board

The North American Free Trade Agreement's (NAFTA) Technical Working Group (TWG) on Pesticides has more than 15 years of pesticide regulatory cooperation involving Canada, Mexico and the United States. Our multilateral collaboration has resulted in measurable success in aligning pesticide regulation in North America while maintaining high standards of protection for human health, safety and the environment. The Executive Board is proud to present the NAFTA TWG's proposed strategic framework outlining our objectives and priority work areas for the next five years.

Introduction

During the past five years the NAFTA TWG has been very productive and successful in accomplishing diverse improvements to facilitate the simultaneous introduction of new pesticides and uses, reassessing pesticides with existing registrations and harmonizing technical issues and procedures. As a continuum of these achievements, this document represents the NAFTA TWG's strategy for collaboration among the three NAFTA countries during the next five years, 2016 – 2021. This strategy reflects the maturing of the TWG's work on issues to support the NAFTA mission and goal, and its significant accomplishments with the pest management sector. It also looks to the future to improve the alignment of the North American registration and maximum residue limit (MRLs) systems for pesticides and for products treated with pesticides. This is the fourth strategy of the TWG.

The regulatory authorities that comprise the TWG and developed the NAFTA TWG Five-Year Strategy include:

- Canada
 - Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA),
- United States
 - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Pesticide Programs (OPP)
- Mexico
 - Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación (SAGARPA) – Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food) through the Servicio Nacional de Sanidad, Inocuidad y Calidad Agroalimentaria (SENASICA) - National Service for Animal and Plant Health, Food Safety and Food Quality
 - Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (SEMARNAT) - Secretary of the Environmental and Natural Resources



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- Comisión Federal para la Protección contra Riesgos Sanitarios (COFEPRIS) - Federal Commission for the Protection against Sanitary Risks

Mission

NAFTA TWG serves as a focal point for addressing pesticide issues arising in the context of liberalized trade among the NAFTA countries, while recognizing the environmental, ecological and human health objectives of NAFTA.

Goal

Align the North American registration systems for pesticides and products treated with pesticides and make work-sharing a way of doing business.

2016– 2021: Vision for the Next Five Years

In 1998, North American governments united with the shared goal to be a model for pesticide regulation by enhancing work-sharing among governments to improve the free trade of pesticides and food. To achieve this, the TWG must continue to align our North American registration system for pesticides and pesticide-treated products. With the expiration of each five-year strategy, the TWG reassesses its objectives and priority work areas with stakeholders. During the TWG's prior annual stakeholder meeting in November 2013, the TWG and stakeholders agreed to continue to focus on working to remove trade barriers, continue collaboration on joint reviews and work shares, and continue to cooperate on science and regulatory issues and harmonize where possible. Additionally, the TWG is interested in exploring opportunities for exchanging technical information and successes with other countries, including those in the Americas, so they can be aware of the value of multi-lateral collaboration. With these considerations in mind, the TWG will focus its attention on three objectives and cooperate on projects identified to support these objectives.

Strategic Objectives and Priority Work Areas

OBJECTIVE 1: Identify trade barriers and approaches to promote equal access and simultaneous introduction for pest management tools.

The ability to align MRLs has importance for the value of products and equal access to global markets. Over the years, the TWG has been collaborating with affected stakeholders to identify trade barriers and promote alignment of MRLs through joint review program. We plan to continue identifying current trade barriers by using innovative approaches.

MRL Alignment:

Encourage registrants to consider potential export markets of agricultural commodities intended for treatment with proposed new pesticides or new uses as a way to reduce the



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number of use expansion submissions and reduce potential trade barriers. The TWG will also meet in advance of Codex meetings to discuss each country's anticipated position when possible in order to better align our positions.

Expansion, Development and Harmonization of Crop Groups with Specified Representative Crops for Field Crop Residues Studies:

Continue ongoing work, through the International Crop Grouping Consulting Committee (ICGCC) for harmonizing crops, on the process for developing new/additional crop groups. Revise the existing guidance document as new scientific information becomes available.

OBJECTIVE 2: Encourage cooperation on joint reviews of new pesticides and uses, and the re-evaluation/re-registration review of pesticides to increase efficiency and quality of decision making.

Joint reviews of applications for new pesticides and MRLs continue to expand beyond North America.

Additionally, NAFTA countries have begun to take a more active role as observers or secondary reviewers of data assessments, thereby, increasing TWG's technical capabilities in risk assessments. To manage the risks associated with pesticides on the market, it is important to conduct periodic re-evaluations of those pesticides with the most current scientific knowledge and standards. The re-evaluation of pesticides demonstrates the commitment NAFTA countries have in ensuring their safe use.

Increasing Simultaneous Registration of Biopesticides:

Seek opportunities with biopesticide manufacturers for their simultaneous submission of registration applications to NAFTA countries to provide opportunities for joint review. Biopesticides continue to make strides in providing efficacious, lower risk pesticide management tools for growers. Multiple country submissions and joint reviews will provide growers and other pesticide users with more choices for pest management.

Minor Use Joint Reviews:

Continue the focus on pesticide registration for minor uses. Work with the minor crop grower communities, the U.S. IR-4 program, and the Canadian Pest Management Centre program to: 1) identify pest control gaps, 2) follow the established minor use joint review procedures to enable joint submissions of registration applications in U.S. and Canada, and 3) make simultaneous regulatory decisions in both countries within a 10-month timeframe.



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Coordination of Registration Review and Re-evaluation:

Continue to identify opportunities for countries to work-share on pesticides. Work shares that are currently ongoing include the following pesticides: glyphosate and neonicotinoids.

OBJECTIVE 3: Work cooperatively on priority science and regulatory issues and practices including data requirements, science approaches and policies for data interpretation, and risk assessment and communications of regulatory decisions.

Scientific challenges remain in working through differences in data requirements and risk assessment processes among NAFTA countries. The TWG identified the following opportunities of joint scientific collaboration to facilitate alignment of data requirements, risk assessment methods, and better aligned regulatory decision making among NAFTA countries.

Pollinator Protection:

Share information on policies, risk assessments, initiatives, and actions to improve the countries' protection of pollinators. EPA and PMRA will provide training to SAGARPA and SEMARNAT on the process for conducting pollinator risk assessments.

Alignment of Data Requirements/Science Policies:

To facilitate a common approach and efficiencies in joint reviews and worksharing among EPA, PMRA and Mexico, all countries will continue to consider the alignment of data requirements and science policies. This includes developing and completing guidance for the review and interpretation of specific data and guidance related to risk assessment methodologies (e.g., cumulative exposure) and novel technologies such as RNAi (Ribonucleic acid Interference).

Integrated Approaches to Testing and Assessment (IATA):

EPA and PMRA will continue to work on initiatives related to Chemical Testing in the 21st Century. An example of this type of work includes a bilateral effort by EPA and PMRA to develop an OECD Guidance Document that builds upon the existing EPA and PMRA guidelines on waiving/bridging acute toxicity studies, and a continuation of their joint efforts to work with stakeholders on alternative approaches for the acute toxicity studies.

Closing Remarks

As the regulatory nature of pesticides advances, it is imperative that our NAFTA TWG goals and strategic objectives evolve as well. We believe this proposed strategy reflects NAFTA countries'



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and their stakeholder's current and future work goals with the end goal of increasing liberalized trade among NAFTA countries. Maintaining our commitment to the NAFTA TWG 2016-2021 strategy would not be possible without the support and participation of our stakeholders. In the years to come, we look forward to maintaining and strengthening our relationships that have developed over the past 18 years.