

Section: Quarantine and Regulatory

Phaseout of methyl bromide as a fumigant – will QPS uses continue?

Banks, J.*#

Grainsmith Pty Ltd, 10 Beltana Rd, Pialligo ACT 2609, Australia. Email: apples3@bigpond.com

* Corresponding author

Presenting author

DOI: 10.5073/jka.2010.425.307

Abstract

The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (MP) seeks to eliminate emissions to the atmosphere of all ozone-depleting gases. This includes emissions of methyl bromide fumigant. Phaseout of production and consumption of methyl bromide, quarantine and pre-shipment (QPS) uses excepted, is now well advanced. This includes phaseout of non-exempt uses on postharvest durable commodities and structures. Annual non-QPS use on structures and postharvest durable foodstuffs is now less than 300 tonnes a year globally.

There are potential alternatives for almost all remaining non-QPS uses on post-harvest durables. Their actual adoption is constrained by regulatory/registration issues in a number of countries where there is a great need for rapid treatment to meet transport and harvesting schedules. A few recalcitrant and specialised uses remain without recognised alternatives, notably for disinfestation of some high moisture dates immediately postharvest.

QPS uses continue to be exempted from control under the agreed MP control measures for methyl bromide. Production of methyl bromide for QPS uses is now the largest new production on an ozone-depleting substance for an emissive use unregulated under the Montreal Protocol. Regulation of emissions from QPS treatments is under continuing discussion, with a decision whether or not to bring emissions from QPS under some form of MP control possible in late 2010. There are actual or potential alternatives for most of the high volume use of methyl bromide (export grains, export timber and wood packing material (ISPM 15)). Both MP and the IPPC already urge adoption of alternatives and other emission reduction measures from QPS use on durables, where feasible.

A further and more detailed discussion of alternatives for QPS treatment of grain, timber (logs) and wood packaging material, following the 2009 Quarantine and Preshipment Task Force Report (TEAP 2009), is to be published prior to the Montreal Protocol Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) meeting in June 2010.

Keywords: Methyl bromide, Quarantine, Alternatives

References

- TEAP, 2009. Report of the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel. Quarantine and Preshipment Task Force – Final report. October 2009. UNEP:
Nairobi.http://ozone.unep.org/Assessment_Panels/TEAP/Reports/TEAP_Reports/teap-qpstf-october2009.pdf.