

Wisconsin DATCP: Comments invited on use of Sonalan® HFP on potatoes

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MADISON - Members of the public may comment through Thursday, May 9, on a proposed special registration that will allow use of an herbicide to control hairy nightshade in potato fields.

The special registration by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection will allow growers to use Sonalan® HFP on potatoes before the plants emerge from the soil. The product is labeled for use on some other crops in Wisconsin to control annual grasses and broadleaf weeds, but it is not labeled for use on potatoes. It is used on potatoes in 16 other states.

Sonalan® HFP contains the active ingredient ethalfluralin and is registered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency by Gowan Co. LLC.

Hairy nightshade is a common weed in potatoes. It may be a host for potato nematodes, and for insect pests and diseases, including blight that attack potatoes and reduce yields. It produces berries that are extremely toxic to humans, which creates a food safety risk at harvest. Other herbicides are not adequate and pose a risk to groundwater.

The preliminary environmental assessment indicates that the proposed registration will not require a full environmental assessment. This special registration will expire Dec. 31, 2023.

For a copy of the assessment, contact Alyssa Foss, DATCP, P.O. Box 8911, Madison, WI, 53708-8911, (608) 224-4547. It is available for review at the department Monday-Friday, 7:45 a.m.-4:30 p.m., 2811 Agriculture Dr., Madison, second floor. Comments received on or

before 4:30 p.m., May 9, will become part of the preliminary environmental assessment record. Send comments to Alyssa Foss by mail at the above address or by email at Alyssa.Foss@wi.gov.

The special registration process allows states to register additional uses of pesticide products without prior federal approval. It helps growers address local pest problems that cannot be adequately controlled by any available federally registered product. These problems include insect outbreaks, fungal diseases, and grasses and weeds that outcompete crops. Details about the special registration process are available at https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/SpecialPesticideRegistrations.aspx.