

Pest Management Regulatory Agency

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Att. Director General
Margherita Conti

Norwegian Food Safety Authority



Difenoconazole – status in Norway

After evaluation of the plant protection product Dividend 37,5 LS, The Norwegian Agricultural Inspection Service decided in 1998 to deny registration of the product with the active ingredient difenoconazole. At the time, it was the Norwegian Agricultural Inspection Service that was responsible for registering pesticides (Norwegian Food Safety Authority after 2004). The decision was a result of difenoconazole's worrisome ecotoxicological properties, in particular the persistence in soil and water/sediment systems which were thought to be worse under Norwegian climatic conditions. Dividend 37,5 LS was never allowed on the Norwegian market.

According to the Norwegian Regulation relating to plant protection products, national authorisation is required for the use of a plant protection product for seed treatment. However, the treated seeds are not considered as plant protection products. Instead, treated seeds are covered by another regulation (Regulation related to seeds).

The Norwegian Food Safety Authority received an application from Strand Unikorn on January 17, 2013 for a derogation from the Regulation on seeds of September 13, 1999 No. 1052 §35, which states that treated seeds may only be sold if it is treated with a plant protection product that is authorized in Norway. The application for derogation from this regulation concerned import of seed grain treated with difenoconazole. On February 15, 2013 the Norwegian Food Safety Authority denied the application due to difenoconazole's persistence, bioaccumulation and toxicity to aquatic organisms.

Be aware that for applications for derogations under the Regulation on seeds, the Norwegian Food Safety Authority does not carry out a risk evaluation but rather uses cut-off criteria (e.g. average half life of < 1 year). The decision of February 15, 2013 was reversed on March 3, 2013 based on new studies submitted by the applicant which resulted in an estimated average half life slightly below 1 year. The derogation for import of seed grain treated with difenoconazole expires on March 6, 2018. Please note that this does not mean that we still have uses of difenoconazole allowed in Norway. Our decision from 1998 is still in effect, that is, it is prohibited to sell, stock, store or use difenoconazole as a pesticide.

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