

**Date:** Autumn 2016

**Q. What is the issue?**

**A.** The future of many essential OSR herbicides e.g. metazachlor, quinmerac carbetamide, propyzamide is under threat, given the levels detected in water destined for drinking.

**Q. Why do we need to worry about it?**

**A.** Not complying with the Water Framework Directive puts the continued authorisation of metazachlor and quinmerac based herbicides under threat. The Water Framework Directive (WFD) and pesticide regulations (1107/2009) are connected, which was not the case with 94/414 and may lead to regulatory restrictions in the future if action is not taken to address detections of metazachlor and quinmerac in raw water. BASF and Adama have joined forces to develop and implement metazachlor and quinmerac product stewardship under the 'Metazachlor Matters' brand.

**Q. How do metazachlor and quinmerac get into water?**

**A.** Metazachlor and quinmerac get into water through two sources:

1. In the farm yard - handling/sprayer cleaning
  - a. This can be avoided by good operator practice, adopting VI guidance.
2. In the field - via surface run-off, field drainage
  - a. Rainfall events have a big impact. We cannot control the weather but we can reduce the risk.

**Q. What actions do I need to take to reduce metazachlor and quinmerac getting into water?**

**A.** Early establishment is key to prevent metazachlor and quinmerac moving to water. Beyond product substitution (which in reality is limited due to the essential role metazachlor and quinmerac play in most oilseed rape weed control programmes in UK), there are two other critical components:

1. Reducing the application rate will reduce concentrations in drainage water.

2. Application before drainflow starts and good soil structure/seed bed prep will minimise potential for movement to surface water.

## **Q. So what does this mean for autumn 2016?**

**A.** BASF and Adama have developed the guidelines for 2016 by focusing on dose and timing.

### **Dose**

- The maximum dose rate for metazachlor in WOSR is 750g/ha  
(Label restrictions still apply)

### **Timing**

- Land that is not drained
  - No timing restrictions
- Drained Land
  - Avoid application after 1<sup>st</sup> October
  - If soil/ seedbed are favourable and drains are not flowing, applications can continue until 15<sup>th</sup> October
- Drained land in Drinking Water Safeguard Zones
  - No application after 1<sup>st</sup> October

To find out if you're in a Safeguard Zone go to the [Environment Agency website - What's in your backyard?](#)

## **Q. What is a Drinking Water Safeguard Zone?**

**A.** Areas in catchments (upstream) that influence the water quality at drinking water abstractions which are at risk of failing the drinking water protection objectives.

These non-statutory Safeguard Zones are where action to address water contamination will be targeted, so that extra treatment by water companies can be avoided. Hence the 1<sup>st</sup> October cut-off date.

There are currently seven Safeguard Zones for metazachlor, and 9 for quinmerac, these could increase in the future if further progress is not made. Our ultimate aim is to reduce these numbers over time.

**Q. How do I find out if I am in a Safeguard Zone for metazachlor or quinmerac?**

**A. Agronomists and growers should visit the Environment Agency's web-site, [- What's in your backyard?](#)** Enter their post code, a map will then appear with at risk areas highlighted, a table will also appear which summarises the pesticides the Safeguard Zone covers. Metazachlor and quinmerac will be listed if at risk.

**Q. Is the cut-off date irrespective of whether the drains are flowing?**

**A. Essentially, yes, but clearly application of metazachlor or quinmerac will depend on rainfall events and seed bed preparation and conditions. We recommend you discuss with your agronomist if you are unsure of timings.**

**Q. Why am I expected to farm by calendar date?**

**A. Clear guidance is required to promote better understanding and deliver change in on farm practice, which will deliver lower levels of detection in water and protect metazachlor and quinmerac for the future. Agronomists and growers on drained land and those in Safeguard Zones are in higher risk situations. The later applications are made, the greater risk of fields moving towards field capacity and drains start flowing and the potential for movement of metazachlor to water. Growers should have these dates in mind when planning oilseed rape establishment this autumn. The date is for guidance (is not statutory) – other factors which are important are, the soil moisture deficit, seedbed condition and soil structure.**

**Q. What is drained land?**

**A. Where it is either permanent e.g. clay or plastic pipes overfilled with gravel, or temporary e.g. mole drains.**

**Q. What percentage of oilseed rape is grown on drained land?**

**A. Broadly speaking, 60% of oilseed rape area is grown on drained land.**

**Q. How do I adopt this guidance and still get the best out of my oilseed rape crop?**

**A.** The new advice fits with good oilseed rape agronomy. It emphasizes the need for:

1. Good soil structure
2. Sowing early, into good seedbeds
3. Using metazachlor early

These are also the base for high yield potential, providing quick establishment, good root growth and early removal of weed competition.

**Q. Is the new advice on the label?**

**A.** No, the new advice is not on the label and so is not statutory. However unless the advice is followed, metazachlor and quinmerac use could be severely restricted or even revoked in the future. Label restrictions still apply.

**Q. Are split applications still allowed?**

**A.** Split applications are still allowed, as long as the second application is applied before end of September.

**Q. Does the 1000g metazachlor ai/ha over three year restriction still apply?**

**A.** Yes, this restriction still applies.

**Q. Are all metazachlor and quinmerac herbicides included?**

**A.** BASF and Adama advice applies to all their metazachlor and quinmerac containing herbicides. It is recommended that it is also applied to other manufacturers' metazachlor herbicides as contamination of water is dependent on the AI and not the brand applied.

**Q. What effect will different cultivation techniques have?**

**A.** H2OK? Advises that deep subsoiling and mole draining may allow a more rapid movement of pesticides through the soil structure and to avoid this, growers should only

subsoil just below pan depth to remove any identified compaction and avoid subsoiling or mole draining before using any products with a Water Protection Advice Sheet (WPAS). Min or No-till techniques can help reduce soil erosion and compaction and increase organic matter levels in the soil.

**Q. What is a WPAS?**

**A.** WPAS stands for Water Protection Advice Sheets and are available for download for key pesticides from the [VI website](#).

**Q. How else can I protect soil from raindrop impact?**

**A.** Leaving plenty of surface trash will help reduce the impact.

**Q. Why is protecting metazachlor important?**

**A.** Metazachlor is a key active in controlling key broad leaved weeds and as a foundation to black-grass programmes. Without metazachlor weed control in oilseed rape will become very difficult resulting in reduced yields and more crop contamination.

**Q. Is this a UK specific initiative?**

**A.** No, this is an EU initiative and not just UK specific.

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Use plant protection products safely. Always read the label and product information before use.

For further BASF product information including warning phrases and symbols refer to [www.agricentre.basf.co.uk](http://www.agricentre.basf.co.uk)

For further Adama product information including warning phrases and symbols refer to [www.adama.com](http://www.adama.com)