

Metaldehyde Slug Pellets

Introduction

Metaldehyde is a valuable and popular product for slug control in a wide range of crops. However, extreme care is needed to prevent it reaching raw water supplies as it is virtually impossible to completely remove, even when using existing advanced water treatment processes. If insufficient care is not taken then there is a serious risk that its use will be restricted.

How does metaldehyde get to water

Metaldehyde is moderately soluble in water and research has shown that the most likely route to water, is in solution via field drains or as surface run-off. However accidental application to water spills and handling/cleaning practice all matter.

How best to use the active

Ensure operators are trained and hold the appropriate certificate of competence. Assess slug populations early by test baiting. Only apply pellets if there is a risk of slug damage according to thresholds. Calibrate applicator to ensure an accurate spread pattern. Check the width to which your pelleter can spread accurately. For single disc machines on quad bikes, a 12m bout width is most likely to give even application. Ensure no pellets are applied within 6m of a ditch or a watercourse. This includes seasonally dry ditches.

Dose - No more than 210g ai/ha between 1 Aug and 31 Dec

- For additional protection of water 160g ai/ha or lower may be recommended by your BASIS registered adviser.
- Maximum total annual dose 700g ai/ha year.
- Maximum individual dose per application 210g ai/ha

Rainfall and Drainflow

- Metaldehyde is moderately water soluble and can be mobile, especially in heavy soils.
- Do not apply metaldehyde slug pellets if drains are running
- Do not apply metaldehyde if heavy rainfall is expected as this can lead to significantly higher losses to water.

UK-wide Best Practice Guidelines

Metaldehyde levels above the 0.1ppb limit for a pesticide have been detected in many raw water supplies. It is imperative that these supplies are protected.

Discuss with your BASIS registered advisor the best practice measures and latest guidelines and advice to avoid risks to water from metaldehyde use.

Reducing the risk

- Always follow the advice on the left hand side of this sheet
 - Make sure you can tick **all** the boxes in the Metaldehyde Stewardship Group checklist below
- | | ✓ or X |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. Operators trained and qualified to apply slug pellets. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Use minimum active per ha to avoid drainage and run-off losses. Maximum total dose from 1 Aug and 31 Dec is no more than 210g ai/ha*. For additional protection of water suppliers/BASIS advisers may recommend rates reduced to 160g ai/ha or less*. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Single disc applicators on quad bikes set up to apply at 12m bout widths. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Field drains are not flowing. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. No pellets to be applied within 6m of a watercourse or dry ditch. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Do not apply when heavy rain is forecast. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

*from any combination of metaldehyde products

Remember : 5 kg/ha of product is 75g ai/ha of a 1.5%, 150g ai/ha of a 3% or 200g ai/ha of a 4% product