

May 1, 2017  
14 Melrose Circle South  
Rockland, ME 04841

Maine Board of Pesticides Control  
28 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

CC Raymond Connors, BPC

Dear Board of Pesticides Control Members;

We are writing regarding the registration in Maine of products containing the pesticide Paraquat. The individuals of our group, which meets regularly in Camden, are all impacted by Parkinson's Disease. Some of us suffer from the disease, some of us care for those with Parkinson's. One way or another we all live with and are affected by this progressive degenerative neurological condition.

Paraquat is produced in the United Kingdom primarily by Syngenta a corporation based in Switzerland. However its use is banned both in the United Kingdom and the European Union. A 2011 article in the European Journal of Epidemiology reported on a study that people who work with or live near fields sprayed with paraquat and two other pesticides are more likely to suffer from Parkinson's Disease. Earlier in the same year a study published by the National Institutes of Health found that people who used paraquat or the pesticide Rotenone were 2 1/2 times more likely to suffer from Parkinson's. This last study, known as the Farming and Movement Evaluation (FAME) drew on a broad US government project called the Agricultural Health Study which tracked more than 80,000 farmers and their spouses, as well as other people who applied pesticides, in Iowa and North Carolina.

It is our understanding that three pesticide products containing Paraquat are currently registered for use in Maine. We understand our rights and responsibilities regarding notification of pesticide use. However it seems that unless a person is specifically aware of a pesticide's application, there is no way of knowing where and when a pesticide is being used or will be used. In fact, there is no substantive database that reflects more than the most general information about the *amount* of restricted use products used in Maine, and even then only commercial applicators are required to provide such information *at the end of the season*. People who live near blueberry fields are aware of pesticide use. But where are Paraquat products even being used in Maine? Croplands? Roadsides? Power cuts? Without this information how can we act on our "rights and responsibilities"?

Understanding as we all do the deep impact of a disease like Parkinson's on a person's life and the lives of family members; and **seeing no clear way to protect Maine residents from exposure to Paraquat**, we respectfully request that Maine follow the lead of the UK and the Europe Union and ban the use of pesticides containing Paraquat in Maine. In the absence of compelling reasons for the application of such products, we feel that it is hard to justify their continued use in Maine.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding this matter at the above address.

With thanks for your time and consideration, sincerely,

Members of the Parkinson's Support Group, Camden