



NHSC bans 2 hazardous substances

Mr. Suriya Juangroongruangkit, Minister of Industry (MOI) and Chairman of the National Hazardous Substance Committee (NHSC) revealed the results from the 2-1/2020 meeting held on April 30th, 2020. The meeting considered many important issues for over 3 hours. One of which was regarding the Draft Ministerial Notification (No...) B.E... on the List of Hazardous Substances of MOI. The meeting came to the conclusion that Paraquat and Chlorpyrifos would be categorized as Type 4 hazardous substances. In other words, they will be banned effectively on June 1st, 2020. Before reaching the decision, the committee carefully took various issues into consideration such as the impact of health, environmental issues, farmers, industry, economy, and society.

Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MOAC) and the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) also agreed with the decision. Moreover, MOPH, together with its committee will work on setting the appropriate levels of residues in food products according to relevant legislation.

“There were 17 out of 24 committee members agreed with the Draft Ministerial Notification of MOI, while 6 persons disagreed and 1 person abstained. In conclusion, the majority agreed on the first draft regarding the list of hazardous substances. They provided observations as well as suggestions for proceeding with responsible and relevant Departments to enumerate clear measures in order to have the least impact on all parties.” Mr. Suriya said.

Mr. Suriya further stated that Department of Agriculture (DOA) was tasked to seek information and study on substitute substances from other countries that have banned Paraquat and Chlorpyrifos. DOA is supposed to report to the Committee in the next meeting which will take place within 1-2 months from now.

Concerning the approval of the minutes of the meeting and the approval of the meeting resolution on November 27, 2019, regarding the consideration to prohibit the use of hazardous substances in agriculture, the meeting confirmed that the resolution has been duly approved by most voters. Nevertheless, some committee member reserved their right for non-approval.

In addition, there are other issues, such as the consideration and approval of 4 other Draft Regulations/Ministerial Notifications, proposed by responsible Departments. The implementation will be in accordance with concerned provisions of the Hazardous Substance Act (Issue 4) B.E. 2562, including determination of custom border posts for import, export and transshipping of hazardous substances, and the leniency of practice for return or re-export.

For next step, the responsible Departments will propose to the Cabinet for approval or endorsement by the Director General of each Department and further publish in the Government Gazette. These will enable effective enforcement by the Committee and responsible agencies. The committee has agreed to appoint 9 sub-committees to screen, provide opinions, and take action on various matters, such as the Sub-Committee on Consideration for Registration of Hazardous Substances on Agriculture, and the Sub-Committee on Advertisement Control, etc.

Mrs. Umaporn Pimolbutr, Deputy Permanent Secretary of MOAC, said that there were approximately 10,000 tons of Paraquat and Chlorpyrifos remained in importers' stocks and in stores. She believes the chemicals are still traded and utilized by some farmers. The exact remaining amount will be determined upon stock survey on June 1, 2020. Whoever possesses the chemicals shall submit them to DOA for further destroy in appropriate manners.

"Farmers have long been believing that Paraquat is a cheap and magical substance. From now on, they have to be more selective with chemicals for use with each plant. It is time for adjustment", said Mrs. Umaporn

Source

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