The University of Hertfordshire Agricultural Substances Databases - Using the Databases Off-line

This document aims at providing information regarding the use of the PPDB, BPDB and the VSDB off-line i.e. in the MS Access or Ms Excel format.

Information on the Terms and Conditions of use for each database can be found in a document that is available on the database website as a PDF download.

The Pesticides Property Database (PPDB) is a long running project that aims to collate into one system a broad variety of data relating to pesticides. It is available in two formats:

- The free (subject to our IPR and copyright restrictions) to use online system.

- As an MS Access or MS Excel database licenced on an annual basis.

There are a number of points to consider if you intend to use the PPDB, BPDB and/or the VSDB off-line:

- The database is licenced on an annual basis. If you do not renew your licence at the end of its licencing term you must not continue to use the data or the database. To do so would be breach of our copyright and IPR.

- We are constantly working on the database, updating and undertaking general maintenance. As part of this activity it is sometimes necessary to restructure parts of the system. Therefore if you intend to directly link your application with the PPDB please bear in mind that our structure is not fixed and so you should try and build in flexibility to accommodate any changes we may make, especially if you intend to keep the database up to date. However, should you need the database in a fixed format we can produce that for you but we will charge for this service.

- As we are constantly updating the database the version we deliver to you is the database on the day of issue and may not be identical to the online database at a later date. We therefore ask that you take advantage of our quarterly updating service.

- We do not keep a record of the changes to the database we make. The administration of this would be too burdensome.

- Data is added to the database generally using two or three fields. The main data item field will provide the data in the prescribed units and under the prescribed conditions (e.g. solubility in mg L-1 at 20 °C) and the second field provides an indication of our confidence in the data (Quality Barometer). For example, A5 = high quality regulatory data, and Q1 = adhoc expert judgement. Details of this Quality Barometer can be found in the PPDB Support document (see http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/aeru/ppdb/en/ docs/Background_and_Support.pdf). Sometimes it is not possible to adhere to the standard units or prescribed conditions and where this is the case details will be given in the Quality barometer field or, where qualifying data is often needed, in the third accompanying data field. Therefore when you are using the data in the PPDB it is important to check all three data fields and harmonise the data as suits your particular application.

- Data in the main database fields are formatted as character strings and are not generally numerical. This is to enable us to store data in the field information such as 'stable, not applicable, etc.' or to provide qualitative descriptions where no quantitative data can be found. Therefore, depending upon your specific application, you may need to reformat the database such that non-numerical data is removed and the field is reformatted before it can be used.

- Note that whilst our data collation processes prioritise regulatory documents or peer reviewed literature, for many pesticide active substances data is scarce and so a wide variety of sources are used. Consequently, not all the data is of the highest peer reviewed quality. The Quality Barometer will identify the general source and our confidence in the data.

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