

Feb. 7, 2024

L.D. 2189 Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 41: Special Restrictions on Pesticide Use, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Board of Pesticides Control

In Favor Testimony by Dominic LaJoie, Board member of the Board of Pesticides Control

Senator Ingwersen; Representative Pluecker; Members of the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee. My name is Dominic LaJoie from Van Buren and I am currently a board member of the Board of Pesticides Control. I will be speaking on the Boards behalf today in favor of L.D. 2189. The proposed rule changes referring to chapter 41 section 5: Plant- Incorporated Protectants.

The Board, in past meetings, have identified current rules that it feels are in need of changes for various reasons such as complying with federal rule changes, general housekeeping, policy incorporation and modernization. As research and technology evolve it allows us to review and refine rules accordingly to benefit and protect Maine into the future.

Chapter41, section 5, was identified by the board as having the need of being updated and several discussions led to consensus to engage the public process involved in rule changes. All received public comments were reviewed and addressed by the board and staff and were respectfully and carefully taken into consideration in developing this proposal.

The decision to include all Plant-Incorporated Protectants known as PIP's and not just BT corn provides further protection. It captures other potential crops identified as PIP's that are registered in Maine to be regulated under Chapter 41 rules, which currently they are not. Reducing grower training and certification from every 3 years to one time for continued licensure makes sense as there have been minimal changes in training materials over the years since PIP's were first registered. It is also recognized that as PIP's continue to evolve they will most certainly be agenda topics in annual continuing educational programs offered to pesticide applicators. Striking the minimum of 1 acre for resistance management was based on research data and Refuge-in-a-bag technology which mitigates risk. Also access is improved for growers who want to adopt PIP technology on their farms. It should be noted that EPA regulates all PIP's as pesticides and PIP's play a role in the reduction of conventional pesticide usage across the U.S. as well as in Maine. All other provisions in Chapter 41 section 5 will remain in rule. Finally the diverse background of the members of the Board of Pesticides Control allows for thoughtful sometimes lengthy discussions when considering rule changes or amendments with best possible outcomes in mind. Thank you.

Respectfully

Dominic J LaJoie

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