

Feature Story



BASF fungicides can help protect waterlogged trees

Full bloom is a beautiful yet precarious time frame for an almond orchard. Not only are the pink buds that open to white blooms a stunning sight to behold, they represent the potential yield that may be harvested from each tree. A blossom directly correlates to an almond if the bloom is protected properly and allowed to set into a healthy nut.

Almond blossoms are delicate and susceptible to a variety of diseases. Growers know the importance of protecting the potential almond against diseases that could impact yield, so they apply a fungicide at pink bud and another powerhouse fungicide at full bloom, such as Merivon® fungicide from BASF, to encourage a strong nut set.

This year poses more threats to almond blossoms than usual. Extreme rainfall has flooded many orchards, leaving standing water in its wake. Normal applications of fungicide have been stalled because of navigational difficulties in flooded orchards and the concern of run-off into nearby streams.

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation has authorized the emergency application of Pristine® and Merivon® fungicides from BASF to orchards with standing water in Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Merced, San Joaquin, Sutter, Stanislaus, Tehama, Yolo and Yuba counties until June 1, 2017. Full details of this emergency application can be found online here.

Pristine and Merivon fungicides are labeled for aerial applications on tree nuts, along with a variety of other crops. BASF supports this use when ground applications are not possible, such as instances of standing water. Applicators should be advised that thorough coverage is necessary to obtain optimum disease control with these fungicides. Sufficient spray application volumes need to be used for thorough coverage and the label requires a minimum of 10 gallons of spray solution per acre to be used.

Standing water in orchards can cripple yields for almond growers, not only because of the increased chance of disease outbreak, but because trees are under stress. Pristine and Merivon fungicides provide Plant Health benefits to trees that can help them withstand stress, such as becoming waterlogged from standing water, as well as being proven disease management tools that provide excellent control of a variety of full bloom diseases.

When applying Pristine or Merivon fungicides during this emergency period, remember that conditions need to be right. Water must be standing and not have the ability to flow into state waterways where there are fish and wildlife. Only apply it to orchards where standing water will not be pumped from the orchard after the fungicide application. Each application of fungicide should be made in accordance with the label directions.

For more information on Pristine and Merivon fungicides and the approval of emergency applications to orchards with standing water in California, please contact Nadine Keutzer.

To learn more about the emergency application for orchards with standing water, please visit

<https://www.co.sutter.ca.us/contents/pdf/ag/Emergency%20Application%20of%20Fungicides%20to%20Orchards%20with%20St>

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