

Computer retrieval of plant pesticide registration information

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People advising primary producers need comprehensive, up-to-date information on the registration status, crop use, recommended rates, and limitations of pesticides.

The Queensland Agricultural College Computer Centre has a HP 1,000 computer with IMAGE data-base soft-ware. The QAC-PESKM data-base of plant pesticide registrations has been designed to allow on-line editing and interrogation. The QUERY subsystem allows sorting of entries and formatting with headings and columns so that lists of pesticide "uses" sorted by crop and by pest and by active constituent are printed. Lists of "preparations" sorted by active constituent/trade-name are also printed.

The IMAGE data-base uses fixed length records and pointers to find quickly the entries that have a particular value for a key item. Some of the fields in a record are given in the table.

TABLE 1. Pesticide "use"

Item	Number of Characters	Key
trade name	20	
active constituent	18	(key)
Australian distributor	10	
active constituent per 1,000	6	
poison schedule	2	
caution	14	
crop	12	(key)
pest	26	(key)
rate of use of product per 100 L	8	
rate of use of product per hectare	10	
withholding days	2	
schedule	12	
registered name	64	(key)

The line-printer output from the data-base is photo-reduced and offset for distribution. COM microfiche is also prepared quickly and economically. QAC-PESKM functions as an index for use by people advising primary producers, directing them to preparations which are registered for use against a particular pest in a particular crop in a particular state. Comprehensive instructions for use can then be obtained from the label or from a compilation of label data.