

Westpalstown  
Oldtown  
Co.Dublin

Mr. Xavier Prats Monné  
European Commission  
Directorate General for Health and Food Safety  
B - 1049 Brussels  
Belgium

4<sup>th</sup> May 2016

Ref: EU proposal to withdraw diquat

Dear Mr. Monné

I am writing to you to raise our concerns regarding the EU proposal to withdraw the approval of the registration of diquat which is the active substance used in essential herbicide crop protection products such as Reglone.

Reglone is an essential tool in the potato industry for countries like Ireland with a wetter climate with benefits such as:

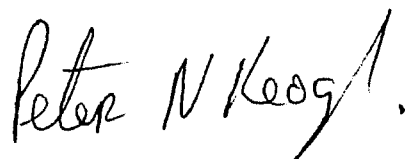
- Optimises production of healthy, standardised tubers: uniform seedlings, less size variation (e.g. industrial processing), prevention of pathogen transmission to tubers.
- Facilitates easier harvesting: Potato skins are hardened more quickly, facilitating removal of the tubers from the stolon.
- Extends shelf life: Reduced tuber infections after storage and therefore quality assurance; the crop can be marketed more flexibly after harvest, targeting optimum wholesale price.
- An indispensable partner of non-chemical alternatives: non-chemical methods require combined strategies with chemical treatments.
- Flexibility in choice of variety: late ripening varieties can still be harvested in warm soil conditions.
- Minimizes waste from harvest to transformation: desiccation of vegetative parts favours firm potato skin, reducing susceptibility to damage during harvest and subsequent handling; wastage is therefore kept to a minimum.
- Consistent efficacy: no dependency on weather conditions for use.

Over the last number of years, the availability of products has been ever diminishing and there is no alternative that we are aware of to diquat for use in the industry. It has been a trusted tool for growers in this country for many decades.

This proposal not only impacts Potato growing but many other arable crops such as oilseed rape, cereal crops, peas, beans and other legumes.

Diquat is likely to be considered at the next EU Standing Committee, made up of Member State representatives, in mid-May and we call on you to help the Irish agriculture industry in retaining this vital tool – there is no alternative.

Yours sincerely



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