

Flazasulfuron – A New Total Herbicide for Amenity Areas

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ABSTRACT

The revocations of diuron, a long time stalwart of residual weed control in Amenity situations, and recently dichlobenil have left a large void in weed control in the Amenity area. Flazasulfuron, under the brand name of Chikara[®] Weed Control, is expected to fill that void by providing broad spectrum residual weed control either alone or in mixture with glyphosate.

Flazasulfuron received UK regulatory approval in Autumn 2008 for use on hard surfaces (railway ballast only), natural surfaces not intended to bear vegetation and permeable surfaces overlying soil. Under the conditions of the approval flazasulfuron may be used in Amenity situations that are plant free. It is from the sulphonyl urea group of chemistry working by inhibiting the AcetoLactate Synthase (ALS) enzyme which is key in the synthesis of important proteins required for cell division and plant growth. Flazasulfuron is taken up by the roots and shoots of weed species which will either not emerge above the soil surface after treatment or if they do so will soon discolour and die. The mammalian and eco-toxicological profile of flazasulfuron is that of a modern product but whilst safe to aquatic invertebrates it is not safe to aquatic flora and as such carries a LERAP B restriction. Flazasulfuron is formulated as a water dispersible granule (WDG) and as a sulphonyl urea the dose rate is very low, being just 150 g ha⁻¹ of product which equates to 37.5 g a.i. ha⁻¹.

Flazasulfuron has non selective activity on a wide range of both broad leaved and grass weeds either pre or post emergence but efficacy is superior when applied pre-emergence. If weeds are present at application then a tank mix with an approved formulation of glyphosate is recommended. Flazasulfuron is expected to provide residual weed control from 3–5 months depending on the incident weed species and may be applied via a boom sprayer or a knapsack sprayer.