

INDIA PULSES AND GRAINS ASSOCIATION

(Registered u/s 25 of the Companies' Act 1956)

A Non-Profit Organisation as per Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013

CIN NO: U74120MH2011NPL217869



Dear Patrons,

India Pulses and Grains Association (IPGA) had arranged a meeting of Shri. Ashwani Kumar, Joint Secretary – Plant protection with Trade Commissioners, Counsellors and Agriculture Counsellors in New Delhi on January 30th, 2017. As all are aware, the PQ Department has announced that they will not extend any relaxation to non-compliance of Methyl Bromide fumigation for agri-commodities with effect from April 1st, 2017. This means that any consignment/cargo arriving without MBR fumigation from load port will be rejected by the PQ Department.

The objective of this meeting was to get the PQ Team and all Trade commissioners and Agriculture Counsellors of exporting countries on a single platform and provide them with guidance from the PQ Team on the way forward to ensure that there are no rejections from April 1st.

The PQ Team included Mr. Ashwani Kumar, Dr. A K Sinha (PPA), Dr. V K Srivastava (JD-PQ), Dr. P S Nain (JD-PQ for Mumbai) and about 6 other PQ Department official and scientific officers. Trade Commissioners, Counsellors and Agriculture Counsellors from 20 countries were present for the meeting.

Dr. V K Srivastava gave a brief presentation of the PQ Rules and Regulations ([Click here to view presentation](#)) after which Mr. Ashwani Kumar spoke about the steps taken by the Department and the available options for the exporting countries. A synopsis of Mr. Kumar's speech is as follows:

1. The Rationale for the decision:

- a. Exports of agri-commodities are always done as per the PQ Norms mandated by the importing country. Every India exporter does the same but exporters to India are not doing this.
- b. No other country in the world offers any relaxation for non-compliance. India is the only country where such a facility is given to the trade.
- c. The Montreal Protocol has not banned the use of MBR for fumigation of

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harvested/stored crop. The ban is for use in the field on the soil.

- d. All the countries that have banned the use of MBR have taken *suo moto* action and are in violation of the Montreal Protocol to which they are signatories.
- e. Around 64 countries have banned the use of MBR as it depletes the ozone layer. Why should India fumigate for all these countries in India and deplete its own ozone layer so that these countries can save their own ozone layer?

2. The reason for need to use Methyl Bromide:

- a. Methyl Bromide is the only effective fumigant that can eradicate pests and insects across all four stages i.e. Egg, Larvae, Pupae and Adult.
- b. All other known fumigants can eradicate live adult pests and insects. Therefore, the eggs, larvae and pupae in the cargo can metamorphose into adults in transit and affect India's bio-security and affect our soil and our crops.

3. The options advised by Shri Ashwani Kumar: It will be the responsibility of the NPPOs of exporting countries not using MBR to approach the PQ Department – either Mr. Ashwani Kumar or Dr. A K Sinha – Plant Protection Advisor to discuss the following permissible options:

- a. Alternate fumigants: All countries using alternate fumigants need to submit technical efficacy data, test data proving that the fumigant is effective in eradicating pests, insects across all the four stages i.e. egg to adult to the PQ Department. The Department will study the data and if they are satisfied with the results, the Department will allow the use of the said fumigant.
- b. System Approach: The PQ Department is willing to explore the System approach wherein a team from the Indian PQ Department will visit the country of export, do a detailed study of their systems from cultivation till export. If the entire system / process gives the team the confidence that the system followed will not allow pests and insects, etc to be present in the cargo, and the same is following an SOP which is being strictly monitored by a reputed agency/department. the Department will allow such cargo fumigated by that country to be imported without MBR fumigation
- c. Pre-inspection of cargo: The Department is also willing to consider pre-shipment inspection process

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The bottom line remains that NPPOs will have to approach the PQ Department and not the other way round. Mr. Ashwani Kumar has already written to all the NPPOs in this matter.

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Mr. Kumar also announced that countries Tanzania, Brazil, Ukraine, Malaysia, Costa Rica and Togo have agreed to start using MBR after this decision by the Indian PQ Department. He also said that a few countries like USA, Canada, France, etc have already submitted data to the PQ Department and they will be reverting to these countries within the next 7 to 10 days.

Mr. Ashwani Kumar clarified that the deadline of March 31st will be for vessels arriving in India on March 31st. The Association has requested Mr. Ashwani Kumar to make March 31st as the deadline as per Bill of Lading at load port instead of the date of arrival in India. Mr. Kumar has asked IPGA to submit a request to the Department for consideration. The representation is being sent to Mr. Kumar today i.e. February 1st, 2017.

Mr. Ashwani Kumar has appealed to all the Trade Commissioners, Counsellors present to urge their NNPOs to connect with his Department at the earliest so that there is no disruption in trade. He has assured that the PQ Department will revert on any communication received from the origin countries on a priority basis.

Regards

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