

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**40 CFR Part 180**

[OPP-301017; FRL-6595-9]

RIN 2070-AB

Humic Acid, Sodium Salt, Exemption Tolerance**AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).**ACTION:** Final rule.

SUMMARY: This regulation establishes an exemption from the requirement of a tolerance for residues of humic acid, sodium salt when used as an inert ingredient (adjuvant, UV protectant) in pesticide formulations applied to growing crops and raw agricultural commodities after harvest. LignoTech USA, Inc. submitted a petition to EPA under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, as amended by the Food Quality Protection Act of 1996 requesting an exemption from the requirement of a tolerance. This regulation eliminates the need to establish a maximum permissible level for residues of humic acid, sodium salt.

DATES: This regulation is effective July 18, 2000. Objections and requests for hearings, identified by docket control number OPP-301017, must be received by EPA on or before September 18, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Written objections and hearing requests may be submitted by mail, in person, or by courier. Please follow the detailed instructions for each method as provided in Unit VIII. of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION.** To ensure proper receipt by EPA, your objections and hearing requests must identify docket control number OPP-301017 in the subject line on the first page of your response.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: By mail: Indira Gairola, Registration Division (7505C), Office of Pesticide Programs, Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20460; telephone number: (703) 308-6379; and e-mail address: gairola.indira@epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**I. General Information***A. Does this Action Apply to Me?*

You may be affected by this action if you are an agricultural producer, food manufacturer, or pesticide manufacturer. Potentially affected categories and entities may include, but are not limited to:

Cat-egories	NAICS codes	Examples of potentially affected entities
Industry	111 112 311 32532	Crop production Animal production Food manufacturing Pesticide manufacturing

This listing is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather provides a guide for readers regarding entities likely to be affected by this action. Other types of entities not listed in the table could also be affected. The North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) codes have been provided to assist you and others in determining whether or not this action might apply to certain entities. If you have questions regarding the applicability of this action to a particular entity, consult the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT.**

B. How Can I Get Additional Information, Including Copies of this Document and Other Related Documents?

1. *Electronically.* You may obtain electronic copies of this document, and certain other related documents that might be available electronically, from the EPA Internet Home Page at <http://www.epa.gov/>. To access this document, on the Home Page select "Laws and Regulations" and then look up the entry for this document under the "Federal Register—Environmental Documents." You can also go directly to the **Federal Register** listings at <http://www.epa.gov/fedrgstr/>.

2. *In person.* The Agency has established an official record for this action under docket control number OPP-301017. The official record consists of the documents specifically referenced in this action, and other information related to this action, including any information claimed as Confidential Business Information (CBI). This official record includes the documents that are physically located in the docket, as well as the documents that are referenced in those documents. The public version of the official record does not include any information claimed as CBI. The public version of the official record, which includes printed, paper versions of any electronic comments submitted during an applicable comment period is available for inspection in the Public Information and Records Integrity Branch (PIRIB), Rm. 119, Crystal Mall #2, 121 Jefferson Davis Hwy., Arlington, VA, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays. The PIRIB telephone number is (703) 305-5805.

II. Background and Statutory Findings

In the **Federal Register** of April 12, 2000 (65 FR 19759) (FRL-6498-8), EPA issued a notice pursuant to section 408 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA), 21 U.S.C. 346a, as amended by the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) (Public Law 104-170) announcing the filing of a pesticide petition PP 6E4705 by, LignoTech USA, Inc., 100 Highway 51 South, Rothschild, WI 54474-1198. This notice included a summary of the petition prepared by the petitioner LignoTech USA, Inc. There were no comments received in response to the notice of filing.

The initial petition requested that 40 CFR 180.1001(c) and (e) be amended by establishing an exemption from the requirement of a tolerance for residues of humic acid, sodium salt. Subsequently the petitioner revised the petition to request the establishment of an exemption from the requirement of a tolerance for residues of humic acid, sodium salt under 40 CFR 180.1001(c) only.

Section 408(b)(2)(A)(i) of the FFDCA allows EPA to establish an exemption from the requirement for a tolerance (the legal limit for a pesticide chemical residue in or on a food) only if EPA determines that the tolerance is "safe." Section 408(b)(2)(A)(ii) defines "safe" to mean that "there is a reasonable certainty that no harm will result from aggregate exposure to the pesticide chemical residue, including all anticipated dietary exposures and all other exposures for which there is reliable information." This includes exposure through drinking water and in residential settings, but does not include occupational exposure. Section 408(b)(2)(C) requires EPA to give special consideration to exposure of infants and children to the pesticide chemical residue in establishing a tolerance and to "ensure that there is a reasonable certainty that no harm will result to infants and children from aggregate exposure to the pesticide chemical residue...."

EPA performs a number of analyses to determine the risks from aggregate exposure to pesticide residues. First, EPA determines the toxicity of pesticides. Second, EPA examines exposure to the pesticide through food, drinking water, and through other exposures that occur as a result of pesticide use in residential settings.

III. Toxicological Profile

Consistent with section 408(b)(2)(D) of FFDCA, EPA has reviewed the available scientific data and other relevant information in support of this

action and considered its validity, completeness and reliability and the relationship of this information to human risk. EPA has also considered available information concerning the variability of the sensitivities of major identifiable subgroups of consumers, including infants and children. The nature of the toxic effects caused by humic acid, sodium salt are discussed in this unit.

Humic substances including humic acid, sodium salt occur naturally in the environment, as they are derived from soil or soil deposits. Humic acid, sodium salt is a hydrophilic, reversible colloid whose molecular weight ranges from 2,000-500,000 daltons. Chemically, humic acids are complex, polymeric polyhydroxy acids formed by the process of degradation of organic matter under the action of soil microorganisms and ground worms.

The Agency has reviewed three mammalian acute toxicity tests. In an acute oral toxicity test of humic acid, sodium salt, an LD₅₀ > 5,000 milligrams/kilograms (mg/kg) was determined. This was Toxicity Category IV. In a primary dermal irritation test, humic acid, sodium salt was found to be Toxicity Category IV. In a primary eye irritation test, humic acid, sodium salt was found to be a mild eye irritant. This was Toxicity Category III. Due to placement in Categories III and IV, no acute effects are expected to occur. Due to the ubiquitous nature of humic substances including humic acid, sodium salt, no chronic effects are expected to occur. There is no available information to indicate that these naturally occurring substances are carcinogenic, mutagenic, or are expected to have any effect on the immune or endocrine systems.

IV. Aggregate Exposures

In examining aggregate exposure, FFDCA section 408 directs EPA to consider available information concerning exposures from the pesticide residue in food and all other non-occupational exposures, including drinking water from ground water or surface water and exposure through pesticide use in gardens, lawns, or buildings (residential and other indoor uses).

A. Dietary Exposure

1. *Food.* Not only are humic substances abundant in nature, but they have been used in commercial agriculture for years to condition soils. Therefore, increased dietary exposure from the use of humic acid, sodium salt as an inert ingredient in pesticide formulations is expected to be minimal.

2. *Drinking water exposure.* Humic substances occur in abundance in nature, including soils, fresh water and oceans. Increased drinking water exposure from the use of humic acid, sodium salt in pesticide formulations would not be expected.

B. Other Non-Occupational Exposure

Humic substances occur in abundance in nature, including soils that are in and around the home. The potential for an increase in the existing non-dietary exposure to the general population, including infants and children, is unlikely as these pesticide formulations containing humic acid, sodium salt would be used in agricultural and horticultural settings.

V. Cumulative Effects

Section 408(b)(2)(D)(v) of FFDCA requires that, when considering whether to establish, modify or revoke a tolerance or tolerance exemption, the Agency consider "available information" concerning the cumulative effects of a particular chemical's residues and "other substances that have a common mechanism of toxicity." The Agency has not made any conclusions as to whether or not humic acid, sodium salt shares a common mechanism of toxicity with other chemicals. However, humic acid, sodium salt is expected to be practically non-toxic to mammals. Due to the expected lack of toxicity, a cumulative risk assessment is not necessary.

VI. Determination of Safety for U.S. Population, Infants and Children

Humic substances are present in abundance in the soil and the environment. Humic substances have been used in commercial agriculture for years to condition soils. Based on known acute toxicity studies, humic acid, sodium salt is not acutely toxic. Due to the ubiquitous nature of humic substances including humic acid, sodium salt, no chronic effects are expected to occur. There is no available information to indicate that these naturally occurring substances are carcinogenic or mutagenic, or expected to have any effect on the immune or endocrine systems. Because of its abundance in nature and lack of toxicity, the Agency did not use the safety factor analysis in evaluating the risk posed by humic acid, sodium salt and did not apply an additional tenfold safety factor to protect infants and children.

Based on the information in this preamble, EPA concludes that there is a reasonable certainty of no harm from aggregate exposure to residues of humic

acid, sodium salt. Accordingly, EPA finds that exempting humic acid, sodium salt from the requirement of a tolerance will be safe.

VII. Other Considerations

A. Analytical Method

An analytical method is not required for enforcement purposes since the Agency is establishing an exemption from the requirement of a tolerance without any numerical limitation.

B. Existing Tolerances Exemptions

There are no existing tolerance exemptions for humic acid, sodium salt.

C. International Tolerances

There are no international tolerances or tolerance exemptions for humic acid, sodium salt. No CODEX maximum residue levels have been established for humic acid, sodium salt.

D. Conclusion

Therefore, based on the information and the data considered, EPA is establishing an exemption from the requirement of a tolerance for residues of humic acid, sodium salt.

VIII. Objections and Hearing Requests

Under section 408(g) of the FFDCA, as amended by the FQPA, any person may file an objection to any aspect of this regulation and may also request a hearing on those objections. The EPA procedural regulations which govern the submission of objections and requests for hearings appear in 40 CFR part 178. Although the procedures in those regulations require some modification to reflect the amendments made to the FFDCA by the FQPA of 1996, EPA will continue to use those procedures, with appropriate adjustments, until the necessary modifications can be made. The new section 408(g) provides essentially the same process for persons to "object" to a regulation for an exemption from the requirement of a tolerance issued by EPA under new section 408(d), as was provided in the old FFDCA sections 408 and 409. However, the period for filing objections is now 60 days, rather than 30 days.

A. What Do I Need to Do to File an Objection or Request a Hearing?

You must file your objection or request a hearing on this regulation in accordance with the instructions provided in this unit and in 40 CFR part 178. To ensure proper receipt by EPA, you must identify docket control number OPP-301017 in the subject line on the first page of your submission. All requests must be in writing, and must be

mailed or delivered to the Hearing Clerk on or before September 18, 2000.

1. *Filing the request.* Your objection must specify the specific provisions in the regulation that you object to, and the grounds for the objections (40 CFR 178.25). If a hearing is requested, the objections must include a statement of the factual issue(s) on which a hearing is requested, the requestor's contentions on such issues, and a summary of any evidence relied upon by the objector (40 CFR 178.27). Information submitted in connection with an objection or hearing request may be claimed confidential by marking any part or all of that information as CBI. Information so marked will not be disclosed except in accordance with procedures set forth in 40 CFR part 2. A copy of the information that does not contain CBI must be submitted for inclusion in the public record. Information not marked confidential may be disclosed publicly by EPA without prior notice.

Mail your written request to: Office of the Hearing Clerk (1900), Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20460. You may also deliver your request to the Office of the Hearing Clerk in Rm. C400, Waterside Mall, 401 M St., SW., Washington, DC 20460. The Office of the Hearing Clerk is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays. The telephone number for the Office of the Hearing Clerk is (202) 260-4865.

2. *Tolerance fee payment.* If you file an objection or request a hearing, you must also pay the fee prescribed by 40 CFR 180.33(i) or request a waiver of that fee pursuant to 40 CFR 180.33(m). You must mail the fee to: EPA Headquarters Accounting Operations Branch, Office of Pesticide Programs, P.O. Box 360277M, Pittsburgh, PA 15251. Please identify the fee submission by labeling it "Tolerance Petition Fees."

EPA is authorized to waive any fee requirement "when in the judgement of the Administrator such a waiver or refund is equitable and not contrary to the purpose of this subsection." For additional information regarding the waiver of these fees, you may contact James Tompkins by phone at (703) 305-5697, by e-mail at tompkins.jim@epa.gov, or by mailing a request for information to Mr. Tompkins at Registration Division (7505C), Office of Pesticide Programs, Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20460.

If you would like to request a waiver of the tolerance objection fees, you must mail your request for such a waiver to: James Hollins, Information Resources and Services Division (7502C), Office of

Pesticide Programs, Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20460.

3. *Copies for the Docket.* In addition to filing an objection or hearing request with the Hearing Clerk as described in Unit VIII.A., you should also send a copy of your request to the PIRIB for its inclusion in the official record that is described in Unit I.B.2. Mail your copies, identified by docket control number OPP-301017, to: Public Information and Records Integrity Branch, Information Resources and Services Division (7502C), Office of Pesticide Programs, Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20460. In person or by courier, bring a copy to the location of the PIRIB described in Unit I.B.2. You may also send an electronic copy of your request via e-mail to: opp-docket@epa.gov. Please use an ASCII file format and avoid the use of special characters and any form of encryption. Copies of electronic objections and hearing requests will also be accepted on disks in WordPerfect 6.1/8.0 file format or ASCII file format. Do not include any CBI in your electronic copy. You may also submit an electronic copy of your request at many Federal Depository Libraries.

B. When Will the Agency Grant a Request for a Hearing?

A request for a hearing will be granted if the Administrator determines that the material submitted shows the following: There is a genuine and substantial issue of fact; there is a reasonable possibility that available evidence identified by the requestor would, if established resolve one or more of such issues in favor of the requestor, taking into account uncontested claims or facts to the contrary; and resolution of the factual issues(s) in the manner sought by the requestor would be adequate to justify the action requested (40 CFR 178.32).

IX. Regulatory Assessment Requirements

This final rule establishes an exemption from the tolerance requirement under FFDCA section 408(d) in response to a petition submitted to the Agency. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has exempted these types of actions from review under Executive Order 12866, entitled *Regulatory Planning and Review* (58 FR 51735, October 4, 1993). This final rule does not contain any information collections subject to OMB approval under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA), 44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*, or impose any enforceable duty or contain any unfunded mandate as

described under Title II of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (UMRA) (Public Law 104-4). Nor does it require any prior consultation as specified by Executive Order 13084, entitled *Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments* (63 FR 27655, May 19, 1998); special considerations as required by Executive Order 12898, entitled *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations* (59 FR 7629, February 16, 1994); or require OMB review or any Agency action under Executive Order 13045, entitled *Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks* (62 FR 19885, April 23, 1997). This action does not involve any technical standards that would require Agency consideration of voluntary consensus standards pursuant to section 12(d) of the National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act of 1995 (NTTAA), Public Law 104-113, section 12(d) (15 U.S.C. 272 note). Since tolerances and exemptions that are established on the basis of a petition under FFDCA section 408(d), such as the exemption in this final rule, do not require the issuance of a proposed rule, the requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*) do not apply. In addition, the Agency has determined that this action will not have a substantial direct effect on States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government, as specified in Executive Order 13132, entitled *Federalism* (64 FR 43255, August 10, 1999). Executive Order 13132 requires EPA to develop an accountable process to ensure "meaningful and timely input by State and local officials in the development of regulatory policies that have federalism implications." "Policies that have federalism implications" is defined in the Executive Order to include regulations that have "substantial direct effects on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government." This final rule directly regulates growers, food processors, food handlers and food retailers, not States. This action does not alter the relationships or distribution of power and responsibilities established by Congress in the preemption provisions of FFDCA section 408(n)(4).

X. Submission to Congress and the Comptroller General

The Congressional Review Act, 5 U.S.C. 801 *et seq.*, as added by the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996, generally provides that before a rule may take effect, the agency promulgating the rule must submit a rule report, which includes a copy of the rule, to each House of the Congress and to the Comptroller General of the United States. EPA will submit a report containing this rule and other required information to the U.S. Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives, and the Comptroller General of the United

States prior to publication of this final rule in the **Federal Register**. This final rule is not a "major rule" as defined by 5 U.S.C. 804(2).

List of Subjects in 40 CFR Part 180

Environmental protection, Administrative practice and procedure, Agricultural commodities, Pesticides and pests, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

Dated: June 27, 2000.

James Jones,
Director, Registration Division, Office of Pesticide Programs.

Therefore, 40 CFR chapter I is amended as follows:

PART 180—[AMENDED]

1. The authority citation for part 180 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 21 U.S.C. 321(q), 346(a) and 371.

2. In § 180.1001, the table in paragraph (c) is amended by adding alphabetically the following inert ingredient to read as follows:

§ 180.1001 Exemptions from the requirement of a tolerance.

* * * * *

(c) * * *

Inert ingredients	Limits	Uses
Humic acid, sodium salt (CAS Reg. No. 68131-04-4)	Adjuvant, UV protectant.

* * * * *

[FR Doc. 00-18097 Filed 7-17-00; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 6560-50-F

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

40 CFR Part 180

[OPP-301022; FRL-6596-7]

RIN 2070-AB

Tebuconazole; Extension of Tolerance for Emergency Exemptions

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This regulation extends a time-limited tolerance for residues of the fungicide tebuconazole in or on garlic at 0.1 part per million (ppm) for an additional 18-month period. This tolerance will expire and is revoked on December 31, 2001. This action is in response to EPA's granting of an emergency exemption under section 18 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act authorizing use of the pesticide on garlic. Section 408(l)(6) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act requires EPA to establish a time-limited tolerance or exemption from the requirement for a tolerance for pesticide chemical residues in food that will result from the use of a pesticide under an emergency exemption granted by EPA under section 18 of the Federal

Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act.

DATES: This regulation is effective July 18, 2000. Objections and requests for hearings, identified by docket control number OPP-301022, must be received by EPA on or before September 18, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Written objections and hearing requests may be submitted by mail, in person, or by courier. Please follow the detailed instructions for each method as provided in Unit III. of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION.** To ensure proper receipt by EPA, your objections and hearing requests must identify docket control number OPP-301022 in the subject line on the first page of your response.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: By mail: Stephen Schaible, Registration Division (7505C), Office of Pesticide Programs, Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20460; telephone number: (703) 308-9362; and e-mail address: schaible.stephen@epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. General Information

A. Does this Action Apply to Me?

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