

Health Questions and Answers for CoreTect®

For use on Citrus Plants against Glassy-winged Sharpshooter

Prepared by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, CalEPA



Q: What is CoreTect®?

A: CoreTect® is a line of insecticidal products containing the active ingredient imidacloprid. CoreTect® is being used by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) and your County Agricultural Commissioner to control the glassy-winged sharpshooter, an invasive insect that can spread plant diseases. CoreTect® is applied by placing tablets 2 - 5 inches below the soil surface, next to the citrus plant. Water is applied to the soil area to dissolve the tablets and allow imidacloprid to be taken up by the roots and distributed throughout the citrus plant. Insects are exposed to imidacloprid when they feed upon plant tissues or ingest plant fluids.

Q: How does the active ingredient, imidacloprid, work?

A: When insects ingest or come in contact with imidacloprid, it binds to their nerve cells. This affects transmission of nerve impulses and causes tremors and other nervous-system problems. This can lead to the death of the insect. Imidacloprid does not bind as strongly to mammalian nerve cells, making it much less toxic to humans and other mammals.

Q: What are imidacloprid's human health effects?

A: Animal testing shows imidacloprid causes effects in the nervous system, liver, thyroid, and on body weight. However, these effects are not expected at the low levels of imidacloprid that occurs when CoreTect® is used according to the instructions on the label. Imidacloprid does not cause cancer, eye irritation, or skin-sensitization reactions (allergic contact dermatitis).

Q: How do regulatory agencies classify imidacloprid's health effects and risk?

A: Imidacloprid is classified by the US Environmental Protection Agency as a "General Use Pesticide." This means there are products containing imidacloprid available to the general public. These products include those registered for use on turf and ornamental plants and various food and feed crops. Imidacloprid can also be used on buildings for termite control and on cats and dogs for flea control.

Q: What is known about the inert ingredients in CoreTect®?

A: In animal studies, some of the inert ingredients in CoreTect® caused slight skin or eye irritation when applied at concentrations significantly higher than what humans would be exposed to from CoreTect® applications. When used according to label instructions, CoreTect® is placed below the soil surface ensuring a very low level of human exposure to inert ingredients.

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Q: What precautions should people take when CoreTect® is applied to the soil under citrus plants in their yard?

A: As a precaution, individuals and pets should stay indoors during treatment. Residents should not perform yard work or allow children or pets to play near the treated areas immediately after treatment.

Q: What precautions should people take after CoreTect® is applied to the soil under citrus plants in their yard?

A: Residents should avoid contact with treated soil until dry. Do not allow children or pets to dig near treated soil. Follow all instructions provided by CDFA.

Q: Can I eat fruit from citrus plants treated with CoreTect®?

A: After CoreTect® is applied to the soil near citrus plants, imidacloprid is taken up by roots and may be found in the fruit and leaves where it provides long-lasting control against insects. However, the detected levels of imidacloprid in plant parts are very low and eating the fruits or leaves does not pose a human health hazard.

Q: Are there other products on the market that contain imidacloprid?

A: Other pesticide products that contain imidacloprid include flea control products and home gardening products.

Q: What should I do if I feel sick after the application of CoreTect® products?

A: Call the California Poison Control System hotline at (800) 222-1222 or consult with your physician.

For further information, please contact:

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September 2019