

Adoption of ProFume® in Europe after the phase out of methyl bromide.

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The strong commitment to protect the ozone layer from European governments and from the European Union Commission has resulted in the complete phase out of methyl bromide (MB) in the milling and food processing industries. 2007 represented the final year of use with a small volume of critical use granted in Italy. The 1991 baseline for MB, that is the yearly consumption in the European Union for these industries, was more than six hundred tons per year. Milling and food processing industries have successfully adapted to pest management without MB, maintaining their production capacity and economical viability.

Sanitation has been emphasized in all countries for pest management, associated with non chemical (e.g. heat treatment) and chemical methods (e.g. fumigation and contact insecticides). The use of contact insecticides is now limited since the main active ingredient, dichlorvos, has been phased out in 2007.

ProFume® gas fumigant (99.8% sulfuryl fluoride) is now established as the alternative fumigant to MB. It has been granted registration for the control of stored products insect pests in eight European countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Republic of Ireland, Spain, Switzerland and the UK. All these countries have in common an extensive post harvest industrial sector, e.g. over one thousand industrial flour mills transforming 30 million metric tons of wheat. Since its first registration in 2003, the number of ProFume fumigations have increased each year and in 2008, year of the complete phase out of MB, over 200 fumigations were completed. In the milling industry ProFume has been adopted by large national milling groups. In the food industry, some large structures, exceeding 100.000 m³, have been fumigated this year in France (breakfast cereal plant) and Italy (several pasta factories belonging to major pasta groups). The overall fumigation standards have improved as a result of the MB phase out, due to new regulatory requirements e.g. on operator and bystander safety, and Dow AgroSciences comprehensive stewardship program emphasizing Precision Fumigation™ techniques. Fumigation companies and distributors, by their commitment and investments in new equipment and training, have also played a major role in this process.

Renewed focus on pest management by hygiene managers and adoption of ProFume have contributed significantly to the phase out of MB in Europe in the milling and food processing industry without market disruption.

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