

## **Critical Use Exemption for Methyl Bromide for Soil Disinfestation: Italy's Experience with the European Union Process**

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Methyl bromide (MB) was phased out on January 1, 2005, and a Critical Use Exemption (CUE) process has been established in order to define the rules for allocating the needed amounts of the fumigant. This paper deals with the effects of the CUE process on Italian horticulture. The actual usage of the amounts of MB allocated to Italy for the year 2005 in the different areas and on the economically most important crops was monitored and critically evaluated. The usage pattern monitored shows that already in the first year after MB phase-out, Italy was able to replace it completely on crops such as zucchini, salad greens, basil and watermelon. However, on crops such as tomato, pepper, melon, eggplant, strawberry, and cut flowers, further work is required in order fully to replace MB. The emerging problems and research needs are discussed briefly.

KEY WORDS: Soil fumigation; Montreal Protocol; pesticide regulation; soilborne diseases.

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