Organophosphate Encyclopedia Article

Organophosphate

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Organophosphate

Refers to classes of organic compounds that are often used in insecticides. Many of the organophosphate pesticides were developed over the last 30 years to replace organochlorine insecticides. They generally have the highest solubilities and shortest half-lives of the common classes of pesticides, but tend to have higher acute toxicities. Organophosphates act by disrupting the central nervous system, specifically by blocking the action of the **enzyme** acetylcholinesterase, which controls nerve impulse transmission. Organophosphates can impact human health at moderate levels of exposure, causing disorientation, numbness, and tremors. Acute exposures can cause blindness and death. Well-known organophosphate pesticides include parathion, malathion, **diazinon**, and phosdrin.

See Also

Cholinesterase Inhibitor; Organochloride