

Quarternary Ammonium Compounds – an irregularity in Organic Farming?



Dr. Jochen Neuendorff

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- › QAC are widely used as industrial chemicals since many years.
- › QAC are used as surface-active agents.
- › QAC are widespread, for example as human and veterinary pharmaceuticals, as additive in materials like asphalt, paints and coatings, cosmetics, **disinfectants**, **pesticides**.
- › Toxicological relevance low.

What to learn from this case

- › QAC-contaminations can indicate the use of prohibited inputs in organic farming – BC 1000 seems to be still in use in Peru (cheap and effective input)
- › Third countries CB were sometimes not very responsive – policy of “wait and see what traders and their EU control bodies bring”
- › German competent authorities did often not follow a strategy to identify and eliminate the origins of the contaminations, but issued a “general suspect” against contaminated organic products.
- › Origins of QAC-contaminations still partly unclear: packaging material?
- › The conformity assessment of **permitted** inputs in organic farming is currently a weak point: “fertilizergate”, Glyphosate in “organic” herbicides, QAC

Is this the future of contamination cases?

- › Import company notifies its EU control body about a contamination of an imported lot with pesticides
- › EU control body blocks the lot temporarily according to Article 91 (2) of Reg. (EC) No. 889/2008 and EOCC-guidelines
- › EU control body informs third country control body and competent authorities involved
- › Third country control body does not react or starts to investigate “the reliability of analysis results” in Europe instead of inspecting its own third country operators
- › Accreditation body and EU-Commission do not react on complaints of the trader and its EU control body
- › Blocking of the lot is lifted, goods are sold as organic.