



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE • BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY  
LESTER SPELL, JR., D.V.M., COMMISSIONER  
BUTCH ALPE, DIRECTOR

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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Emergency Exemption for Corn Seed Treatment Announced**

Mississippi Agriculture Commissioner, Lester Spell, has announced approval by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of an emergency exemption that will provide protection to corn producers throughout the state from blackbird predation of newly planted corn. Mississippi corn growers throughout the state have suffered million dollar losses in recent years due to heavy blackbird predation.

The products receiving emergency exemption under Section 18 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) are **Avipel® Liquid Seed Treatment** and **Avipel® Dry Powder Corn Seed Treatment** manufactured by Arkion Life Sciences, LLC. Corn producers may treat corn seed with Avipel prior to planting to prevent blackbirds and cowbirds and from consuming the seed.

Avipel contains the active ingredient anthraquinone, which occurs naturally in some plants, fungi, and insects. As a bird repellent, anthraquinone works as a taste deterrent.

Corn is extremely subject to bird predation in Mississippi because it is the first crop planted in early spring, when the presence of native and crop seed are very low and high wintering blackbird populations are present. Bird predation during the corn seed germination and plant establishment stages kills seedlings, which reduces plant density, leading to considerable yield reduction.

For additional information, corn producers may contact the Bureau of Plant Industry at (662) 325-3390 or toll-free at 1-888-257-1285.

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