

CHAPTER - III

Saligenin Cyclic Phosphorus Compounds Having Pesticidal Activity.

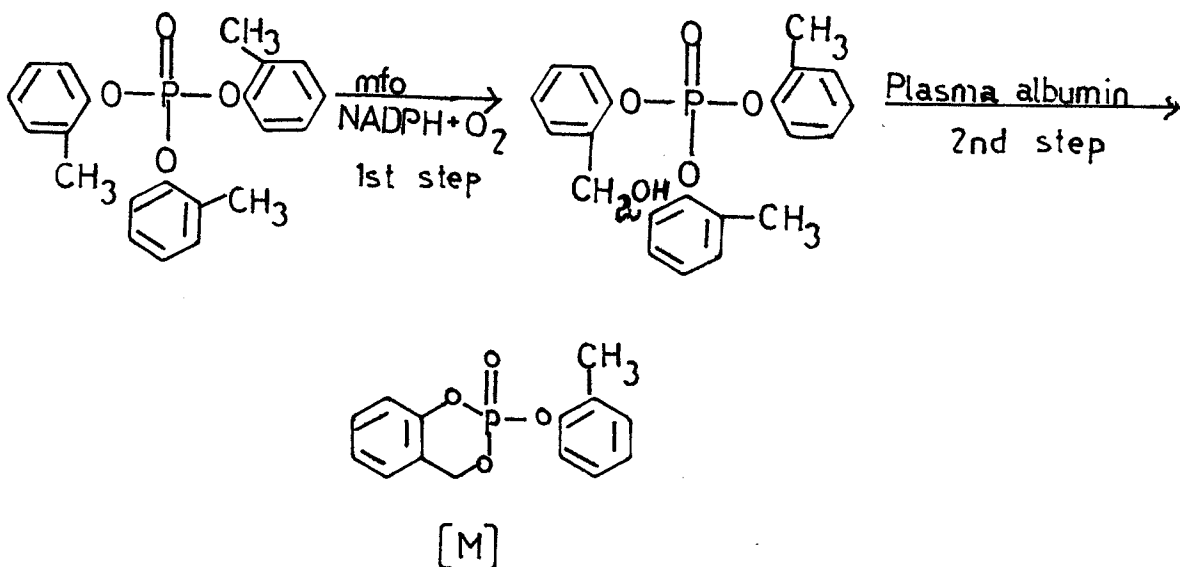
3a. Introduction:

Discovery of saligenin cyclic phosphate as a biologically active metabolite of tri-*o*-tolyl phosphate^(1,2) had lead to the extensive studies on synthesis and chemical, biochemical and biological properties of many related compound^(3,4). Of them salithion (2-methoxy-4H-1,3,2-benzodioxaphosphorin-2-sulphide) has been produced in a large quantity and practically used as an insecticide in Japan^(4,5). This review describes how salithion was discovered and developed into practical insecticide and also the chemical, pesticidal, biochemical and other properties of saligenin cyclic phosphorus compounds.

3b. History of discovery of salithion and related compounds:

In 1930 about ten thousand people in U.S.A. were suffered by flaccid paralysis of the lower limbs about ten days after drinking an adulterated fluid extract of ginger⁽⁶⁾. This was due to the phosphate triester of *o*-cresol, a contaminant present in the ginger extract. In Morocco a similar big outbreak of paralysis took place in 1969 from cooking oil contaminated with lubricating oil of turbo-jet aircraft engines⁽⁷⁾. This was also due to *o*-cresyl phosphate (EOPP) poisoning. The phosphate triester of cresols have been widely used in industries as plasticizers, lubricants, solvents, oil additives etc. Later, Aldridge and Barnes observed that all neurotoxic aryl phosphate, except tri-*p*-ethylphenyl phosphate, had at least

one alkyl group carrying the α -hydrogen atom on the ortho position⁽⁸⁾. This structure -neurotoxicity relationship of triaryl phosphate became clearly understandable by the isolation and characterization of the active metabolites of DDCP^(1,2). The main active metabolite (M) was o-tolyl saligenin cyclic phosphate. This compound (M) was about 100 times more potent to cause ataxia in hens than DDCP, and potentiated the toxicity of malathion 100 times by the dose of 20 mg/kg in mice, while DDCP 4 times by the dose 100 mg/kg, M was ten million times more active than DDCP in the in vitro inhibition of plasma cholinesterase. The conversion of DDCP into active metabolite M proceeds via two steps; the first step, which is catalysed by mixed-function oxidases (mfo) involves the hydroxylation of a ring methyl group; the second step involves the cyclization of this intermediate product to M through intramolecular transphosphorylation; the latter reaction is catalysed by plasma albumin⁽⁹⁾ : [Fig-1]



In the cyclisation reaction, no alkyl ester group participates as the leaving group⁽⁹⁾. Actually no aryl but alkyl saligenin cyclic phosphate was formed in vivo from alkyl di-*o*-tolyl phosphate⁽¹⁰⁾. Such metabolic conversion of TOCP or its analogs was observed in hens⁽³⁾, rats⁽³⁾, cats⁽¹¹⁾ and insects⁽¹⁰⁾.

All aryl saligenin cyclic phosphates have showed no insecticidal activity but manifested a high delayed neurotoxicity to cause ataxia in hens; surprisingly the corresponding cyclic esters (both $n = 0$ and $n = 3$ compounds) having a small alkyl group on phosphorus revealed high insecticidal activity^(1,12). As a result of this research salithion was discovered by the pesticide research group of Kyushu University in Japan in 1963 and was developed into a commercial insecticide in 1965 by Sumitomo Chemical Co.

3c. Synthesis of Saligenin Cyclic Phosphorus esters

The saligenin cyclic phosphorus esters can be prepared by the reaction shown below⁽¹³⁾: [Fig-2]

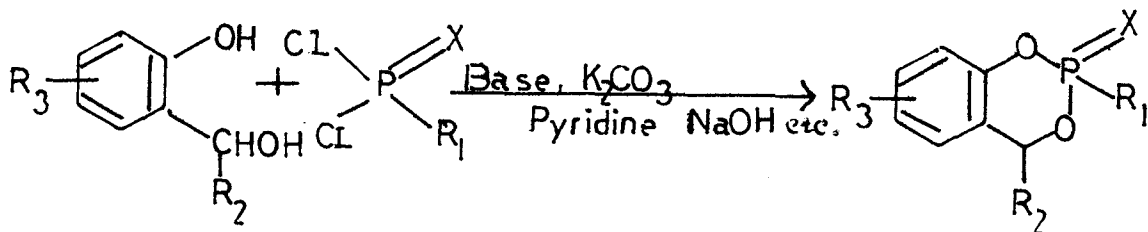


Fig-2

where, $R_1 = R, OR, SR, NHR, NRR$ ($R = \text{alkyl}$);

$R_2 = \text{alkyl, Cl}; R_3 = CH_3, Cl, SO_2$ etc; $i = 0$ or 1 .

Several saligenin cyclic phosphorus esters have been prepared by the above reaction. The chemical, pesticidal, biological and other properties of these compounds have been discussed below (Table I-VIII).

34. Properties of Salithion

Pure salithion is a colourless crystalline powder m.p. $55-56^\circ C$ practically insoluble in water, easily soluble in acetone and benzene, moderately soluble in cyclohexane, toluene and xylene; vapour pressure, 1.5×10^{-6} mm Hg at $25^\circ C$; UV λ_{max}^{nm} (ϵ) 274 (360), 267(360). Salithion has a characteristic IR band at 1020 cm^{-1} for $P-O-CH_2$ in hetero ring, N.M.R δ (CD_2) ppm: 3.76 (3H, doublet, $J_{PH} = 14 \text{ Hz}$, CH_3), 5.21 (2H, doublet, $J_{PH} = 15 \text{ Hz}$, CH_2), 6.3-7.2 (4H, multiplet, benzene ring).

Salithion gives a characteristic fragmentation pattern in mass spectrometry. It gives an intense peak of $(M-CH_3)$ (m/e 201) by a β -cleavage occurring at the exocyclic ester group. Another characteristic fragmentation process is the direct loss of 3H followed by the elimination of formaldehyde. Salithion is relatively unstable in storage. Some secondary

amines, such as carbazole and *N*-phenyl- α -naphthylamine, stabilize the formulation⁽³¹⁾. In a phosphate buffer (pH 7.7), salithion is hydrolysed slowly through opening of the hetero ring by the P-O-(aryl) bond cleavage: the hydrolysis rate constant (25°) $k = 2.4 \times 10^{-4} \text{ min}^{-1}$. The hydrolysis rates of the corresponding cyclic methyl phosphonate, *o*-methylphosphorothiolate (the thiolate isomer of salithion, STB), methyl phosphate (salioxon), and *N*-methyl phosphoramidate are, respectively, 90, 60, 6 and 0.6 times more than that of salithion. Salithion is completely hydrolysed by heating at 100° C for 5 min. with *N*/6 sodium hydroxide to yield saligenin. This is applied for the colorimetric determination of salithion in formulations by allowing the formed saligenin to react, after adjusting pH-8, with 4-aminoantipyrine and then with potassium ferricyanide^(19,20).

In oxidation by bromine water salithion is converted to its oxon (salioxon). Since salioxon (2-methoxy-4H-1,3,2-benzodioxaphosphorin 2-oxide) is some thousand times more active in cholinesterase inhibition than salithion, an enzymatic method after the oxidation can be used for the residue analysis of salithion⁽³²⁾.

Salithion is isomerized into *o*-alkyl saligenin cyclic phosphorothiolates by heating with alkyl iodides (the Pictet-Muka reaction)⁽³³⁾. The reaction is greatly accelerated in such a polar solvent as dimethyl formamide. Potassium carbonate also

assists the reaction. When methyl iodide is used, isomerization occurs to give 2-methylthio-4H-1,3,2-benzodioxaphosphorin-2-oxide (MTBO) (33,34). Salithion is demethylated to form the salt of saligenin cyclic phosphorothionic acid by the action of certain nucleophile such as cyclohexylamine (35) and potassium dimethyl-dithiocarbamate (35,36). The latter agent is particularly suitable for the preparation of MTBO by methylating the obtained salt with methyl iodide.

MTBO is a unique phosphorylating agent. The reaction of salithion are summarized in the following scheme (Fig. 3):

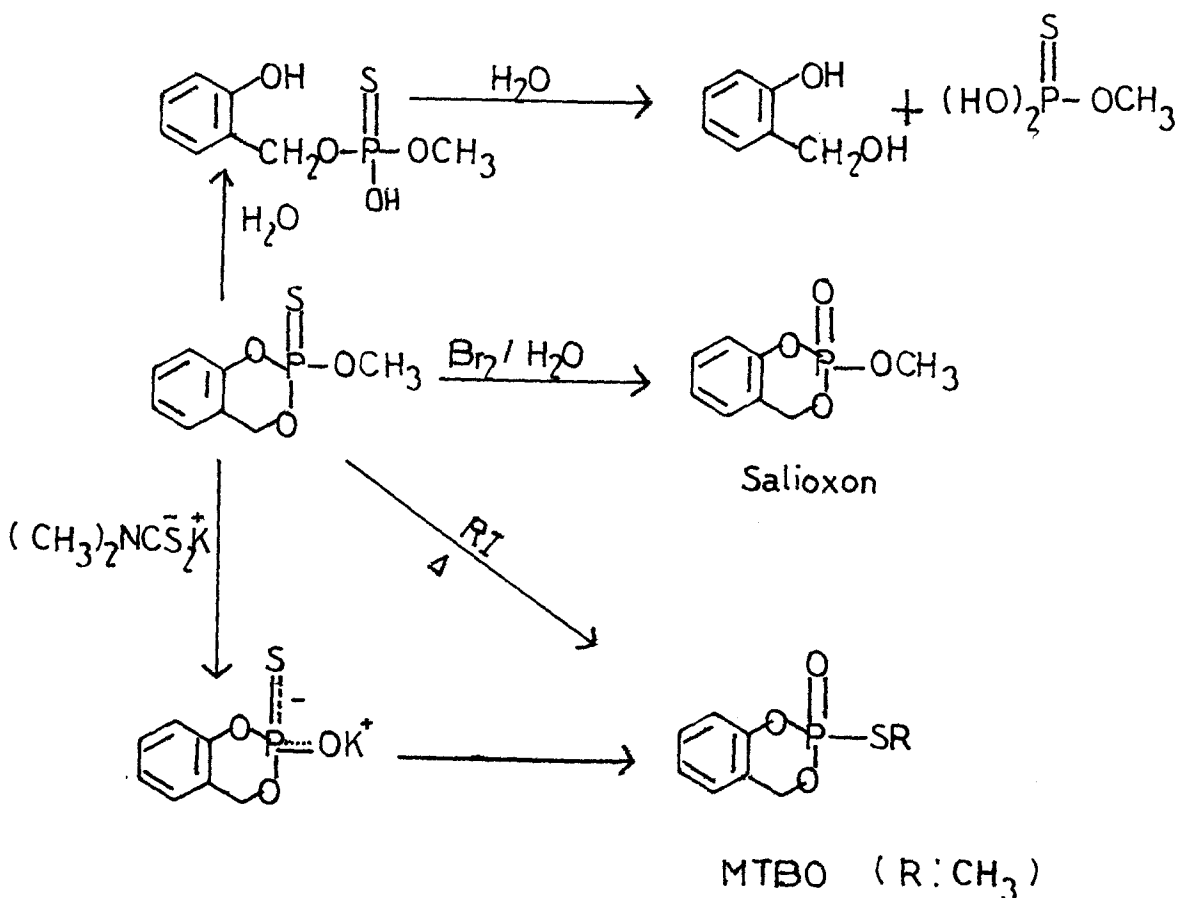


Fig. 3: Chemical Reaction of Salithion.

3c. Insecticidal Activity:

The insecticidal activities of various saligenin cyclic phosphorus compounds including phosphates^(14,15), phosphoramidates⁽¹⁷⁾, phosphorothiolates⁽¹³⁾, phosphonates⁽¹⁶⁾ and their thiono analogs^(20,14,15) have been tabulated (Table I-VII). The saligenin cyclic compounds in any series having an aryl group as an exocyclic substituent on the phosphorus atom have either poor or no insecticidal activity, but small alkyl derivatives have high insecticidal activity, ^{related to} the size of the exocyclic substituent on the phosphorus atom⁽²¹⁾. Methyl derivatives are much more active than higher alkyl and aryl derivatives, except for phosphorothionate series in which ethyl derivative is more active than methyl derivative. *N,N*-dialkyl phosphoramidates are much less active than *NH*-alkyl derivatives. It is interesting to note that the exocyclic substituent of the most active compound in each series (C_2H_5 , SCH_3 , SiH_2CH_3 , CH_2CH_3) differs each other in electronic characteristics, but is similar in size and resembles in steric property such as the distance (about 2.9 \AA) between P and C atoms in the P-C function, if the bond angle of bivalent S is near 90° rather than 109.5° . The phosphorothiolothionates are not enough in insecticidal activity (Table-VII). The phosphates, phosphorothiolates, and phosphonates are too unstable to be used practically as insecticides. The phosphoramidates are several times more toxic to mammals than phosphorothionates.

Introduction of any substituents on the benzene ring, the hetero ring or the exocyclic ester group decreases the insecticidal activity (Table-I, II, III). Thus, the simplest phosphorothionate, salithion, was the most useful compound as the whole series of saligenin cyclic phosphorus compounds.

3f. Nematocidal Activity:

Some saligenin cyclic phosphoramidates and phosphorimidothionates are very effective to kill nematodes (Table-V). *N*-methyl phosphoramidate is most active, but *N,N*-dimethylphosphoramidate is inactive against *Abaditis sp.* suspended in water. Phosphates and phosphonates are almost inactive, but their thiono analogs are effective. Saligenin cyclic phenylphosphomethionate exhibit high activity.

3g. Fungicidal Activity:

Salithion has no fungicidal activity. But saligenin cyclic phosphorothiolates have fungicidal activity (Table-VI). Some of them are effective to protect rice plants from rice blast disease (due to infection by *Utricularia oryzae*). Ethyl and *n*-butyl phosphorothiolates are most promising as fungicides.

3h. Synergistic Activity:

Saligenin cyclic aryl phosphates and phosphonates have synergistic activity with malathion against insects and mites, particularly their resistant strains⁽²¹⁾. 7-methyl-2-phenyl-4H-1,3,2-benzodioxaphosphorin-2-oxide is the most active synergist

against resistant houseflies and green rice leafhoppers. For the resistant strains of red citrus mite, Panonychus citri (McGregor) saligenin cyclic phenylphosphate showed good synergistic action with malathion. Saligenin cyclic alkyl phosphates and phosphorothionates are not, or only poorly active as synergists of malathion against houseflies and green rice leafhoppers.

31. Anticholinesterase Activity:

The insecticidal saligenin cyclic methyl phosphate (salioxon) is very active as an inhibitor of cholinesterase. However, the highly neurotoxic aryl phosphate is a poor inhibitor of cholinesterase, but it is a very specific inhibitor of aliesterase (5,22). The less neurotoxic arylphosphate occupies an intermediate position. In any series, when the size of the exocyclic substituent increases, the compound becomes a more selective inhibitor of aliesterase; in contrast, the compound carrying a small substituent is a more selective inhibitor of cholinesterase (Table-VIII). Arylphosphonates are more specific inhibitors of pseudo-cholinesterase, alkyl phosphates are less specific and aryl phosphates are intermediate.

32. Anti-SH-Enzyme Activity:

The saligenin cyclic phosphorothiolates (Table-VII) have high activity to salicylate (alkylate) mercaptans and to inhibit "SH enzymes" such as alcohol dehydrogenase (18,23). The

activities seem to be related with fungicidal property but not with insecticidal activity. Saligenin cyclic phosphorothiolates are partially hydrolysed by opening of the heterocyclic POC (aryl) bond, more easily than phosphate esters. It was demonstrated that the hydrolysate of saligenin cyclic methyl phosphorothiolate, i.e. *o*-ortho-hydroxybenzyl, *o*-methyl hydrogen phosphorothiolate, reacted with mercaptans to give salicyl thioethers⁽²³⁾. These observations indicate that the saligenin cyclic phosphorothiolates may react with cholinesterase to phosphorylate its serine hydroxyl group and may, on the other hand, be hydrolyzed, to the *o*-hydroxybenzyl esters which react with "OH enzymes" to alkylate their thiol group. "OH-enzymes" may be essential for the life of fungi.

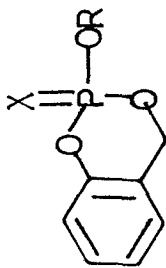
3k. Conclusion:

The high biological activities of saligenin cyclic phosphorus compounds may be attributed to the hetero ring involving one and benzyl ester linkages. The alkylation reaction may be responsible for "OH-enzyme" inhibition and fungicidal activity. The phosphorylation reaction is responsible for esterase inhibition and insecticidal activity and animal toxicity. An exocyclic substituent group affects physical and biological properties by virtue of its electronic and steric characteristics. Thus, methyl phosphorothionate is useful as an insecticide, alkylamidates have systemic activity, alkyl

phosphorothiolates have fungicidal activity, phenyl phosphates have antifilarial activity, and aryl phosphates are neurotoxic and have synergistic activity.

Table - I

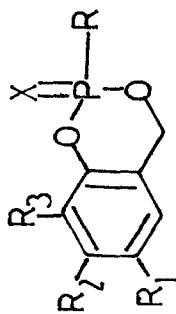
Saligenin cyclic phosphates and phosphorothionates: Physical Properties, insecticidal activity, toxicity and nematocidal activity (24).



X	R	B.P. °C		LD ₅₀ µg/female (Housefly)	LD ₅₀ mg/kg (House)	Nematocidal Activity (Mortality % for Rhabditis sp.)		
		°C/mm Hg	°C			200 ppm	400 ppm	200 ppm
0	CH ₃ (Salifexon)	110-112/0.05		0.035	52	-	-	-
0	C ₂ H ₅	119		0.33	76	100	95	70
0	n-C ₃ H ₇	129-132/0.05		7.1	-	-	-	-
0	n-C ₄ H ₉	150-154/0.05		>10(40)	-	-	-	-
0	C ₆ H ₅			>10(3)	-	100	82	22
S	OH ₂ (Salithion)	(55-56)		0.05	88	-	-	-
S	C ₂ H ₅			0.3	-	-	-	-
S	C ₆ H ₅	36		2.0	-	-	-	-

Table - II

Hex-substituted malic acid Phorbolus ester (thioester compounds): Physical properties and insecticidal activity (26)



X	R ₁	R ₂	R ₃	R	B.P. °C/mm Hg (mp °C)	LD ₅₀ (µg/housefly)
S	CH ₃	H	H	OCH ₃	(34-35)	2.0
S	CH ₃	H	H	O ₂ H ₅	(71-72)	>10
S	CH ₃	H	H	O-α-O ₃ H ₇	158-160/0.2	>10
S	H	CH ₃	H	OCH ₃	110-115/0.65	0.25
S	H	CH ₃	H	O ₂ H ₅	125-130/0.65	3.0
S	H	CH ₃	H	O-α-O ₃ H ₇	140-142/0.65	7.5
S	H	H	CH ₃	OCH ₃	63-70/0.15	1.3
S	H	H	CH ₃	O ₂ H ₅	108-109/0.15	3.0

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Table-II (Contd..)

X	R_1	R_2	R_3	R	B.P. °C/mm Hg (mp °C)	LD ₅₀ (μ g/housefly)
3	H	H	OH ₃	O-n-C ₃ H ₇	120-124/0.15	7.5
3	H	H	OH ₃	HCOH ₃	(30)	3.6
3	C ₆ H ₅	H	H	COH ₃	oil	0.4
3	C ₆ H ₅	H	H	CO ₂ H ₃	oil	0.5
3	C ₆ H ₅	H	H	O-n-C ₃ H ₇	oil	1.0
3	COH ₃	H	H	COH ₃	paste	0.55
3	CO ₂ CH ₃	H	H	COH ₃	paste	2.5
3	Cl	H	H	COH ₃	170-175/0.2	1.75
3	Cl	H	H	HCOH ₃	175-180/0.25	0.06
3	Cl	H	H	COH ₃	160-170/0.2	-
3	H	H	Cl	COH ₃	(72-73)	0.13
3	H	H	Cl	HCOH ₃	(46-47)	0.09
3	H	H	Cl	COH ₃	oil	-

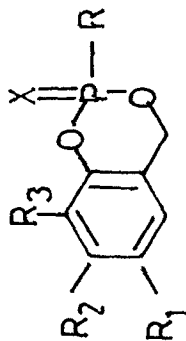
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Table-11 (Contd..)

K	R ₁	R ₂	R ₃	R	S.P. °C/mm Hg (mp °C)	LD ₅₀ (μ g/housefly)
S	Cl	H	C ₆ H ₅	OC ₂ H ₅	paste	1.2
S	Cl	H	C ₆ H ₅	OC ₂ H ₅	paste	3.0
S	Cl	H	C ₆ H ₅	O-n-C ₃ H ₇	paste	> 10
S	H ₂	H	H	OC ₂ H ₅	paste	3.0
S	C ₆ H ₅	H	Cl	OC ₂ H ₅	paste	-
S	C ₆ H ₅	H	Cl	OC ₂ H ₅	paste	-
S	C ₆ H ₅	H	Cl	O-n-C ₃ H ₇	paste	-
S	Cl	H	Cl	OC ₂ H ₅	(87-88)	0.3
S	Cl	H	Cl	OC ₂ H ₅	oil	4.0
S	Cl	H	Cl	nH ₂	oil	3.0

Table - VII

Dino-substituted salicylic anhydride esters (oxy-esteranoids). I. Physiological properties and insecticidal activity (26)



X	R ₁	R ₂	R ₃	H	B.P. °C/mm Hg (m.p. °C)	LD ₅₀ (µg/banana fly)
O	CH ₃	H	H	COCH ₃	139-140/0.3	0.1
O	CH ₃	H	H	CO ₂ H ₃	152-154/0.3	0.4
O	H	CH ₃	H	COH ₃	109/0.05	0.43
O	H	CH ₃	H	CO ₂ H ₃	112-113/0.05	0.7
O	H	CH ₃	H	O-2-C ₃ H ₇	141-147/0.1	7.2
O	H	CH ₃	H	O ₂ H ₃	(93-95)	>10
O	H	CH ₃	H	HNOH ₃	(145-146)	0.14
O	H	H	CH ₃	COH ₃	118-120/0.5	2.0

Contd..

Table III (Contd...)

X	R ₁	R ₂	R ₃	R	M.P. °C/mm Hg (m.p. °C)	Lab (µg/boutserly)
0	H	H	CH ₃	OOCH ₃	105/0.0	2.1
0	H	H	CH ₃	OOCH ₃	135-140/0.6	> 10
0	Cl	H	H	OOCH ₃	145-152/0.2	0.09
0	Cl	H	H	OOCH ₃	160/0.2	0.15
0	Cl	H	H	O-2-O ₃ H ₇	167-169/0.15	0.70
0	Cl	H	H	O-2-O ₄ H ₉	167/0.15	2.5
0	Cl	H	H	O-2-O ₆ H ₅	(89)	> 10
0	Cl	H	H	HHOCH ₃	(149)	0.09
0	H	H	Cl	OOCH ₃	170-171/0.15	0.25

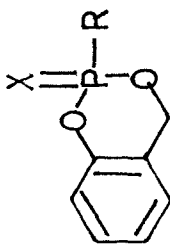
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Table VII (Contd...)

X	R ₁	R ₂	R ₃	R	B.P. °C/mm Hg (M.P. °C)	LD ₅₀ (µg/housefly)
0	H	H	01	002H ₆	151/0.18	0.15
0	H	H	01	0-2-03H ₇	153/0.18	0.30
0	H	H	01	0-1-03H ₇	137/0.04	-
0	H	H	01	0-06H ₆	203/0.52(54)	>10
0	H	H	01	5H0H ₆	(120-129)	0.30

Table - IV

Salicylic Acyl Phosphonates and Phosphonothionates: Physical Properties, Toxicity, Insecticidal and nematocidal activity (26)



X	R	B.P. °C/mm Hg (m.p. °C)	LD ₅₀ μg/fly (Housefly)	LD ₅₀ mg/kg (House-oral)	LD ₅₀ ppm (nematodes- phthalate)
O	OH	140/0.5 (35)	0.19	25-50	
O	O ₂ H ₆	143-149/0.3(25) (30)	0.17	25-50	
O	1-O ₃ H ₇		0.33	-	
O	sec-O ₄ H ₉	110/0.5 (74)	7.0	-	
O	t-O ₄ H ₉		>10 (0)	-	
O	OR = OH ₂	155/2.5	0.63	>100	
O	CH ₂ Cl	160/0.5 (51)	<10 (6)	25-50	
O	CH ₂ OH ₂ Cl	139-141/0	0.99	50-75	
O	O ₆ H ₅		>10 (0)	-	

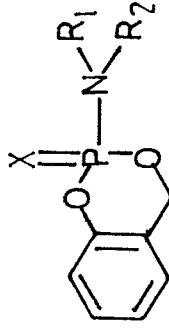
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Table - IV (Contd..)

X	R	D.P. °C/mm Hg (m.p. °C)	LD ₅₀ μg/fly (Housefly)	LD ₅₀ mg/kg (Mouse-oral)	LD ₅₀ ppm (nematode- <i>Abelitia</i>)
3	OH ₃	130/0.6	0.31	5-10	25
3	O ₂ H ₃	120/0.6	0.08	5-10	25
3	1-O ₃ H ₇	108/0.6	0.09	-	-
3	OH ₂ OH	146-150/0.4	1.14	25-50	25
3	O ₂ H ₃ (37)		0.3	-	-

Table - Y

Salicylic azelic Phosphoramidates and Phosphorimidoblenates: Physical properties, insecticidal activity, toxicity and nematocidal activity (87)

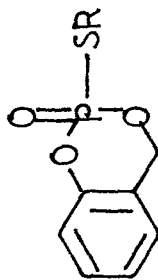


X	N < R1 R2	B.P. °C/mm Hg (m.p. °C)	LD50 µg/female H.fly	LD50 µg/ga (Rice stem- borer)	LD50 µg/ga (Green rice leaf-hopper)	LD50 mg/kg (Mouse)	Minimum conc. (ppm) to kill 100% nematode- Rhadinia
O	NHMe	(87)	0.05	2.84	0.4	5-7.5	< 10
O	NH	(68)	0.66	22.29	3.5	30-50	10-25
O	NHnPr	135-140/0.5	1.50	33.60	33.0	> 50	25-50
O	NHnPr	(84)	3.44	103.34	> 350	> 50	50-100
O	NHnBu	(46-47)	< 10 (54%)	> 214	> 400	> 50	25-50
O	NH, Ph	(131-133)	> 10 (5%)	-	-	-	-
O	N (Me)2	(821)	0.3	13.80	4.0	-	> 200 (10%)

Contd..

Table - VI

Salicylic Glycol Phosphorothiolates; Physical Properties, Insecticidal Activity and Fungicidal Activity (26)



R	B.P., °C/mm Hg (S.P. °C)	LD ₅₀ μg/gm (Oriental housefly)	Protective value (%) against <i>Pirioularia oryzae</i>				Therapeutic value(%) to P. oryzae, at 200 ppm
			250 ppm	100 ppm	50 ppm	25ppm	
CH ₃ (MTEO)	144-145/0.1 (44)	3.00	100	100	100	84.8	7.1
O ₂ H ₅	140-145/0.04	11.23	100	93.7	92.5	81.8	100
n-C ₃ H ₇	145-147/0.07	34.50	100	57.1	34	-	-
1-O ₃ H ₇	155-158/0.1	17.25	-	63.7	34.4	-	-
n-C ₄ H ₉	157-160/0.02	211.8	100	91.7	93.3	75.6	27.6
C ₆ H ₅	(28-33)	73.61	50.2	-	-	-	-

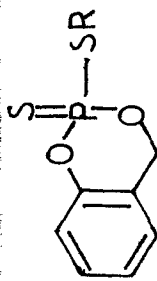
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R	B.P. 00/mm Hg (N.P. 00)	LD ₅₀ µg/gr (Oriental housefly)	Protective value (%) against <i>Piricularia oryzae</i>				Therapeutic value (%) to <i>Zabrotes</i> at 200 ppm
			250 ppm	100 ppm	50 ppm	25 ppm	
Salithion	-	1.60	52(at 500 ppm)	-	-	-	
Hinocan	-	-	100	-	86.2	-	
Blastocidin S	-	-	99.5	-	86.3	-	
Pentachloro-benzyl alcohol	-	-	99.8	93.8	93.8	0	

Table - VII

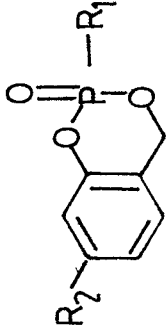
Salicylic Oxole Phosphorodichlorides: Physical Properties and Insecticidal Activity (20)



R	b.p. °C/mm Hg (m.p. °C)	LD ₅₀ (μg/sly)
Cl ₂	(68-70)	0.18
O ₂ H ₅	145-147/0.2	2
n-C ₃ H ₇	145-150/0.25	2.2
1-C ₃ H ₇	140-143/0.1	5
O ₃ H ₅ (CH ₂ -OH = OH ₂)	140-147/0.2	1.7
n-C ₄ H ₉	160-167/0.25	10
C ₆ H ₅	(72-80)	> 10(0)

Table - VIII

The Inhibition of Housefly, Human Blood and Horse Serum Esterases by Some Salicylate Crystals
Phosphorus Compounds (20)



R ₁	R ₂	Housefly I ₅₀ (H) x 10 ³		Human blood I ₅₀ (H) x 10 ³		Horse plasma I ₅₀ (H) x 10 ³	
		CH ₃	Allyl	p-OH	t-OH	Allyl	Malathionase
OH	H (Salicylate)	7.6	3.4	1.3	17.0	230	620
OO ₂ H ₈	H	13.2	2.1	1.6	25.0	240	-
O-m-C ₃ H ₇	H	30.7	3.0	-	-	-	-
O-n-C ₄ H ₉	H	37.5	2.5	-	-	-	-
O-C ₆ H ₅	H	155	1.4	0.5	12.0	120	120
O ₂ N ₂	H	-	-	0.65	72.0	150	470
O ₂ N ₂	OH	-	-	1.6	63.0	230	-
O-p-h-2-OH ₃	H	-	-	1.3	39.0	200	-

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