

Pesticide Spokesman Sees Better Public Attitude

A swing in public opinion toward a more reasonable outlook on the use of pesticides was predicted recently by a

leading spokesman for the agricultural chemicals industry. Speaking at a meeting of the Western Agricultural Chemicals Association, H. L. Straube, vice

president and general manager of the Agricultural Chemical Division of Stauffer Chemical Company, cited four indicators that a reversal from the extremist views against pesticides is forthcoming:

1) House passage of a new federal pesticide control act that "does not represent extremes but promotes, instead, a common-sense middle ground in which the industry, responsible environmentalists and the government can work together";

2) Recognition by industry of the need for products that are ecologically safe, as evidenced by a wide range of new second and third-generation pesticides now coming on the market;

3) Realization by the general public that the benefits of modern living also involve certain environmental risks, "and people are beginning to realize they can't or won't give up everything";

4) More effective communication between the pesticides industry and the press, resulting in the mass media "taking a second and more sensible look at the issue."

Straube warned pesticide producers not to repeat past industry mistakes, notably failure to communicate with the general public and lack of

response to changing social needs.

"We did not get our story across," he said. "We felt we could let our scientists answer questions that arose, and eventually people would understand the basic truths about pesticides."

The public was not aware of the benefits produced by agricultural chemicals, he said. "Before pesticides, the American farmer produced enough to feed himself and 11 others; today he feeds himself and 45 others," Straube noted.

"At the same time, only five per cent of our total work force is engaged in farming, attesting to the massive increase in productivity during the past 25 years. To look at it another way:

Annual losses of crops and livestock to pests in the U.S. are \$20 billion. "If pesticides were withdrawn from U.S. agricultural production," Straube said, "total output of crops and livestock would be further reduced by 30 per cent and the price of farm products would likely increase by 50 to 75 per cent."

This message is now beginning to reach the public, he pointed out. At the same time, Straube said consumers are becoming more practical.

"The consumer simply isn't willing to go back and put up with the inconveniences he took for granted 10 and 20 years ago, but with one important difference: He wants the benefits — but at less and less risk to him and his environment. Products that meet these new requirements are now appearing on the market with more and more frequency."

Looking to the past, the Stauffer executive noted that "as our standard of living continued to advance, people began to take a lot for granted and forgot about agriculture in the process."

"The farm vote was no longer an attractive bloc for politicians to woo — and it took the farmer out of the headlines. People began to think of food as a product that was manufactured, not grown. It was easy for the consumer to forget about the days of the wormy apple, the blemished corn, the half-rotted potato."

"Our affluent society had cured many of its basic ills, so it could now afford to worry about more sophisticated problems," he said.

"We must learn to accept and anticipate these changes," Straube pointed out. "We must recognize that product need is not static. It has changed in the past, it is changing now, and it will change in the future."

Take Extra Care of Bees

Unusual fall weather and high honey prices are combining to require extra good care bees this winter, according to a report to local beekeepers recently by

AAtrex Label Changed

The Environmental Protection Agency has accepted a revised labeling for AAtrex 4L liquid corn and sorghum herbicide, officials of Geigy Agricultural Chemicals announced recently.

The revised labeling now permits farmers and applicators in most areas to use liquid nitrogen or a complete liquid fertilizer as a carrier for the liquid formulation of the popular AAtrex herbicide.

By using the fertilizer carrier, farmers will now be able to save one expensive trip through the field, as well as valuable time. Use of a fertilizer carrier for AAtrex 80W wettable powder had previously been approved.

The fertilizer-herbicide combination may be applied prior to planting or prior to the crop's emergence. However, liquid fertilizer applied after the crop emerges can cause crop injury, so post-emergence applications of the mixture should not be made. AAtrex 4L is approved for post-emergence applications, but not in the fertilizer mixture, Geigy officials pointed out.

Arnold Lueck, associate Lancaster County ag agent, and W. W. Clarke, Extension apiarist. Their report included:

Winter took a long time to arrive, which means that bees were active in the hive until early January. Bees consume more honey than normal under such conditions. They went into winter low on food in many areas, and with this combination of conditions it will be more important than ever to check for food supplies in the late winter. It is possible to open bees at any time that the outside temperature is near 50 degrees F. If colonies are low on food, they should be given food at once.

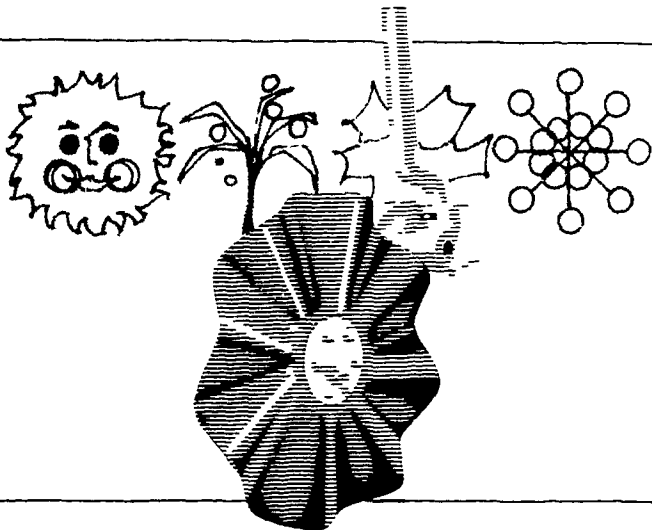
It seems important, with the price of honey so high and the supply, especially of the darker honey, low that all possible colonies be kept alive this winter.

It is also important that all available equipment be filled with bees next spring, but be sure to prepare sufficient supers to take care of the brood and hoeny. It is better to have more supers and fewer bees than the reverse.

Destroyed Temple

In 586 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian king, led a mighty army against Jerusalem. This brought about the fall of the kingdom of Judah and the destruction of King Solomon's temple.

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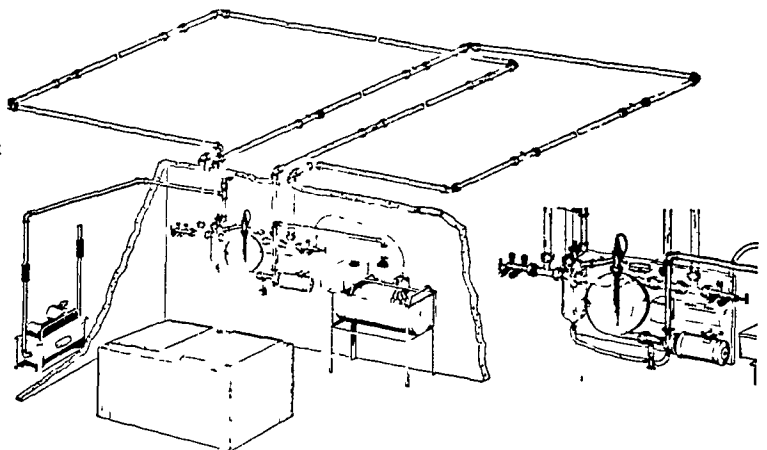
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