



Pesticides. The word evokes images of farmers spraying and dusting cropland for the numerous insects, weeds, and fungi that menace agriculture.

True, farmers are the country's biggest pesticide users. They account for a little over half of all pesticides used in the U.S. In 1970 farmers spent close to \$900 million for insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides.

Who are the other users? Look around . . . at the closely cropped fairway . . . the narrow yet navigable waterway . . . the flawless rosebush. Chances are, they were treated with pesticides.

Industry is the largest nonagricultural user of pesticides, accounting for nearly a fifth of domestic sales. In 1970,



industrial firms spent an estimated \$300 million on pesticide chemicals

Industries apply a wide range of insecticides to protect their products, workers, buildings, and grounds. Carpet makers, for example, treat rugs with persistent types of insecticides to provide long term protection against carpet beetles and other insects that damage animal fibers

Insecticides are also used to prevent contamination of food and stored materials, and to safeguard buildings against the onslaught of termites.

Fungicides perform a variety of industrial chores—to prevent mildew in paint, and to curb slime formation in manufacturing processes.

One of fungicides' major uses is to preserve wood, such as railroad ties, telephone poles, dock piling, and fences. Preservatives prolong these uses

of wood up to 50 years—against roughly 10 years for untreated woods.

Herbicides are used by industry mainly to protect property against weeds and brush. Large shares go to destroy unwanted growth along rights of way, such as highways, railroads, and waterways.

Industrial firms also employ pesticides to treat forest land. It's estimated that private use of pesticide on forests is four times greater than government applications

Homeowners and other urban and suburban residents account for 15 to 20 percent of all pesticide use. In 1970, pesticide preparations for household, lawn, and garden pest control had a retail value of nearly \$300 million.

Pesticides designed for homeowners usually contain smaller shares of active ingredients than those for agriculture and industry. The low concentrations minimize danger to neighboring property, people, household pets, and sensitive plants.

Herbicides are increasingly sold as part of a lawn-care package that contains needed plant nutrients as well as pesticides to check unsightly weeds and undesirable species like crabgrass. In 1968, about 4 million acres of lawn and other

turf (golf courses, public greens, sports fields, etc.) received herbicide treatments at an average cost of \$30 per acre.

A major urban-suburban use of insecticides is to control structure pests such as termites and wood borers. Upon completion, many new buildings are treated with insecticides to stop termites.

Insecticides, sold mainly in small aerosol containers, have become commonplace in the home for curbing pests such as moths and weevils that destroy clothes and furnishings, and lice, flies, and roaches that may carry disease or contaminate food.

Household use of fungicides is generally confined to treating diseases that attack lawns, shrubbery, fruit trees, and ornamentals.

Pesticides have proved invaluable in public health control, particularly in fighting insect-carried diseases such as malaria, typhus, and yellow fever.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that there are 10,000 kinds of insects that directly or indirectly infect man with disease. These insects, according to WHO, cause half of all human deaths, sicknesses, diseases, and deformities.

In the U.S., insect-borne diseases are not considered a serious problem, although more than half the States reported such diseases over the past 3 years. Insecticides are used most often to control the carriers of various types of encephalitis.

Herbicides also play a key role in health control by checking the growth of allergenic-producing plants like poison ivy, oak, and ragweed. Each year poison oak and poison ivy cause roughly 2 million cases of skin poisoning and irritation, for an estimated loss of 333,000 work days.

Federal, State, and local governments are among other users of pesticides, with 10 percent of domestic consumption. Roughly 21 million acres were scheduled to be treated under Federal programs between January and August, 1971.

For all of 1971, pesticides were applied on about 13.5 million acres to arrest the Venezuelan Equine Encephalitis (VEE) epidemic. Another 11.6 million acres in a 9-State area were treated under the Agricultural Research Service's fire ant control program.

Most of the mosquito control districts throughout the country are organized around city or county governments. In 1970, these units spent an estimated \$75 to \$100 million for mosquito control.

USDA Studies Rural Planning and Zoning

An in-depth review of rural planning and zoning practices, issued recently by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, points out that while each State has authorized zoning of unincorporated or rural areas, the number and kinds of governments that may zone in these areas vary markedly.

The report from USDA's Economic Research details the 50 States' land use statutes as they existed in 1968 and summarizes major changes passed by State legislatures in 1969 and 1970. The study itemizes the rural zoning enabling powers conferred by State legislatures on counties, towns and townships, and miscellaneous local governments.

Generally, the local governments authorized to zone are: all or selected counties in the South and West; all or selected towns or townships in the Northeast; and both counties and towns or townships in most Lake States. Where zoning is authorized at two or more levels, the zoning regulations are usually applied by the lower level of government.

The researchers note that, in

the past, the legislative practice of authorizing zoning powers for selected counties only (usually the more populous counties) often allowed haphazard growth in developing and problem areas of other counties. However, legislatures in 18 States have begun zoning at State level to prevent the waste of land and other resources.

A copy of "Rural Zoning in the United States: Analysis of Enabling Legislation," MP 1232, is available free on postcard (please include zipcode) or telephone (447-7255) request from the Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

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