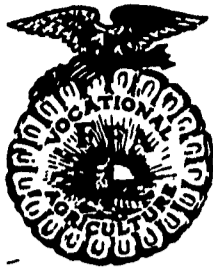


From Local Ag Teachers:



Thoughts in Passing



Ernest Orr

The article this week was prepared by Ernest Orr, teacher of agriculture at Ephrata High School.

This is the time of year when most farmers will start to use more and more pesticides. These are materials used to kill unwanted plants, animals or insects. Pesticides are classified as insecticides, fungicides, herbicides and rodenticides. The "icides" on all of these words mean "killer". Thus, one must handle these compounds cautiously.

Pesticides are playing an ever increasing role in the improvement of the productivity of the farm, both in crops and livestock. Therefore, the spring of the year is always a good time to remind people that pesticides must be handled correctly. If pesticides are used incorrectly, the results can be uneconomical as well as disastrous. However, the proper use of pesticides will help to produce crops and animals high in quality with high yields.

Before using a pesticide,

READ THE LABEL to be safe. Follow the directions closely and carefully. All the information on the label of a pesticide is backed by extensive manufacturer testing. Pesticides and their labels must be approved by the Food and Drug Administration and the USDA before they are released for general sale.

What happens if an employee becomes ill or dies on a farm as a result of using a pesticide? Who is at fault if the chemical used produces a fish kill or kills a neighbor's crops or animals? What happens if an unexpected child dies after getting into stored pesticides? What happens to a crop if it is condemned for having too much pesticide residue? Who is liable? The manufacturer?

Most likely not, because the manufacturer is protected by a non-warranty statement on the label. The seller?

No, the label protects him. That leaves only the farmer. The final responsibility rests with the farmer if something is damaged, injured or dies as the result of improper handling of a pesticide.

Therefore, the grower must understand how a pesticide is to be used to avoid liabilities and to get the most economical return out of a chemical. To do this he must read and follow the label.

What else can the farmer do to get the most out of his pesticide dollar? He must make sure that he selects the right chemical. First he must:

1. Correctly identify the problem to be solved.
2. Identify the chemicals that will solve the problem.
3. Compare the cost of

applying different pesticides.

4. Determine the return for each dollar invested.

5. The type of equipment and protective clothing needed for each possible chemical.

6. Determine the precaution needed for each chemical.

7. Select the best suitable chemical for the situation.

Check equipment before using it. How much spray is the rig delivering? Is the correct pressure setting used? The pressure can greatly affect the amount of spray material used. Are the spray lines and nozzles clean and unworn? Is the sprayer calibrated so the exact tractor speed and pressure needed are known to get the right amount of spray on the crop. Is the tank agitation system working? Are the spray nozzles the correct number of inches off the ground?

A couple other points to consider are the levelness of the sprayboom and alignment of the spray nozzles. Unless there is proper alignment of the nozzles and levelness of the sprayboom, the spray will not be applied evenly.

The timing of the pesticide applications is very important. The applications must be in the right amounts

and at the right intervals of time for best results. The withdrawal statement should be followed to the letter before the crop is harvested or animal slaughtered. If the withdrawal is not followed, the farmer runs the chance of having his animals or crops seized for too much pesticide residues.

The storage of a pesticide is important. They should be put in a locked, dry place which is clearly marked as containing poisons.

In summary, the secret of safe pesticide use is the right chemical on the right crop (or animal) at the right time, and in the right amount. Above all, READ THE LABEL.

xxx

Prepare Sprayers Soon

A rainy spring day is a good time to prepare agricultural sprayers for use, say Extension agricultural engineers at The Pennsylvania State University. Replace worn nozzles, broken or damaged hoses and make other needed repairs. Calibrate your sprayer for accuracy on a warm day.

xxx

Agriculture is America's No. 1. natural resource.

Penn Manor 4-H Club

Penn Manor Community 4-H Club met Tuesday evening for member registration and election of officers.

Officers elected were: Karen Greider, president; Carl Thomas, vice-president; Jay Neff, secretary; Jay Stauffer, treasurer; John Charles, news reporter; Karen Tshudy and James Stauffer, song leaders; Guy Eshelman and Robert Musser, game leaders; Paul Frey, Karen Greider and Carl Thomas, County Council representatives.

Jay Irwin, associate Lancaster County agent, attended the meeting to explain the projects for the coming year.

The club's next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday evening, April 23 at 7:30 p.m. at the Ann LeTort Elementary School.

xxx

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