

Maryland Official Criticizes EPA Action

Maryland Secretary of Agriculture Young F. Hance recently commented that "It is time the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recognized its responsibilities in the usage of pesticides, herbicides and fungicides."

Mr. Hance's remarks came on the heels of a nationwide pesticide controversy set off earlier this month when EPA, in announcing a new Pesticide Hotline system, repeated a discredited 1969 estimate of the number of deaths and injuries in the United States each year from use and misuse of fungicides, pesticides and herbicide.

"It is unfortunate" Mr. Hance said, "that someone in EPA didn't check the inflated pesticide injury figures thoroughly. As it is,

EPA four days later had to retract its statement by admitting that, as of now, there is no reliable estimate of the number of deaths and injuries caused by use and misuse of agricultural chemicals. EPA has admitted that the 1969 figures are highly exaggerated.

"What EPA was saying was: 'Estimates of the number of farm workers made ill every year from misuse of pesticides range in the hundreds of thousands, Hundreds of these workers died.

"EPA would be performing a public service," Mr. Hance stated, "if instead of using such scare tactics it would endeavour to educate the public to the importance of pesticides, herbicides and fungicides and the necessity for employing them

properly.

"At almost the very same time EPA was distributing nationally a radio tape using the discredited 1969 scare figures," he added, "we were in Washington testifying before both the House and Senate Committees on agriculture. In our testimony we made the following statement, based on proven experience:

"We have had a pesticide registration law in Maryland for many years and have had an application and use law since 1969.

"During the enforcement of those laws there have been no instances of related deaths except in cases where poisons were ingested in suicidal attempts. Similarly,

there is no evidence of injury of illness of farmers or farm workers.

"Alarmist and unfounded statements are a form of harassment", Mr. Hance observed. "EPA and a number of federal and state regulatory agencies, would be more effective by working together in a genuine spirit of cooperation. Throughout the country we have seen a tremendous cooperative effort by all concerned to upgrade the education program for the safe use, storage and disposal of pesticide and related productions.

"These chemical products are important tools in the production of food and fiber. With wise use and care, they enable agriculture to provide for the needs of this country and the world," Mr. Hance concluded.

Youth Calendar

Monday, June 9

Meeting of the Ayrshire, Brown Swiss and Jersey 4-H Club at the home of Kenneth Eshleman, Elizabethtown R1 - 7:30 p.m.

Jolly Caterers 4-H Club meeting from 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. at the home of Mrs. Harold Fry.

Tuesday, June 10

4-H Horse Club County Coggins Test at the Fred Bussel farm at Manheim R1 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. All horses must be tested.

Friday, June 13

4-H Dairy Goat Club meeting at the farm of Mr. & Mrs. Roy Mentzer, R2, New Holland, 7:30 p.m.



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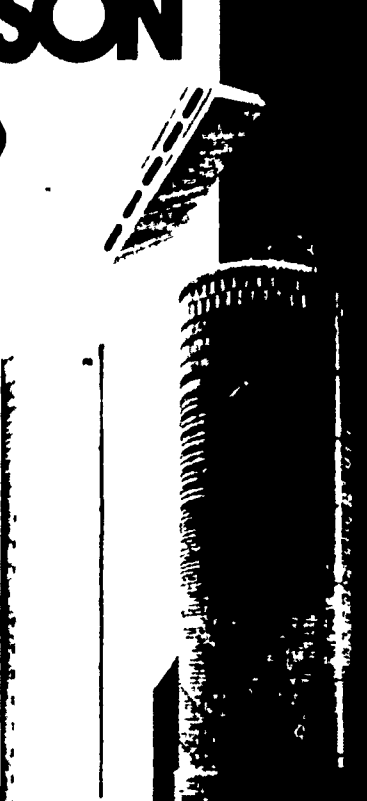
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