

Firm charges political expediency reason for 2,4,5-T ban

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A chemical company official said Friday the Environmental Protection Agency continues to seek a ban on the herbicide 2, 4, 5-T because of "politically expedient" motives, even

though key aspects of the agency's scientific data have been discredited.

Etcyl Blair, Dow Chemical vice president and director of Health and Environmental Sciences, leveled the charge on

opening day of the 2, 4, 5-T cancellation hearings.

"2, 4, 5-T is being victimized by an agency which has expended too many man hours and tax dollars to admit now that the herbicide

is safe when used properly," said Blair.

Furthermore, he cited EPA's denial of its own Scientific Advisory Panel's decision as an indicator of the agency's preconceived political objective.

"Rejection by the international scientific community of the EPA's Alsea II (Oregon) study suggests the agency bowed to public and political pressure in issuing the 2, 4, 5-T emergency suspension in February, 1979, instead of permitting a thorough scientific evaluation," Blair noted.

"As the hearings unfold today, this forum finally permits a complete and unhindered review of all the scientific evidence associated with this issue.

"Scientific experts attending the Dispute Resolution Conference on 2, 4, 5-T concluded the herbicide does pose an unreasonable risk to people or the environment under normal conditions of use.

"The farmers, foresters and herbicide applicators of America also believe it is safe. I believe it is important to note, as this debate process begins, that those with the greatest exposure to 2, 4, 5-T also have the greatest confidence in the product's safety. Dow Chemical believes 2, 4, 5-T is safe," said Blair.

"Dow doesn't sell products which cannot be utilized safely. That's the chief reason that we are determined to defend 2, 4, 5-T against EPA's indictment."

Most uses of 2, 4, 5-T and a related herbicide, silvex, were suspended last year after the EPA received reports that an abnormally

high number of allegedly TCDD-related miscarriages had occurred in isolated spray areas in the northwest.

Methane may fuel ethanol still

LANCASTER — While methane production is still quite a way down the road for most agricultural operations, research is moving ahead into this alternate form of energy available on the farm.

Such research should now move into a second phase, according to Richard Guest, Cornell agricultural engineer, and be linked to the other important source of energy on the farm, ethanol production.

"Already, our research has looked into how methane can be produced," Guest said.

"Now, we need to find out how it can best be utilized on the farm. One important possible use would be as a fuel to run a still to produce ethanol."

Combining these two alternate sources of energy was part of a discussion of

methane by Guest and Roger Grout, Penn State agricultural engineer, at the Lancaster Dairy Manure Management program on Monday.

"The powering of mobile equipment with methane doesn't appear to be practical," Grout said.

"Tanks needed to hold the methane supply for the machinery would be just too large."

But other possible uses for methane might include operating an electrical generator or a diesel engine, Guest added.

The two ag engineers also pointed out that methane production involves significant capital costs and labor requirements.

Presently, cost estimates for just the digester unit to handle manure from 100 cows is \$25,000.

A report on methane

research at Penn State and Cornell was outlined to the seminar audience. Penn State used an upright tank system, resembling a concrete silo with grain bin top; while Cornell used the trench silo method with a plastic tarp to collect the gas.

One of the problems concerning the use of methane gas on the farm, according to Guest, involves the timing of when the most gas can be produced.

More methane gas can be produced during the warmer months since approximately half of production must be utilized during colder weather to heat the digester unit.

But energy requirements also are highest on the farm during the winter for heating and other purposes.

Guest said that the value of methane production during the winter was about six cents per cow per day. During the summer, that value nearly doubled to 11 cents per cow per day.

This placed the value of methane production almost on a par with the nutrient value of manure, which was placed at 12 cents per cow per day. -da

York County Beef Club announces dates

BAIR — The York County 4-H Beef Club held their meeting here recently at the 4-H Center.

Chris Shive gave a report on the 4-H Preview Show which will be held May 31 at the York Fairgrounds. The main purpose of this show is to give the heifers and steers a chance to get used to all of the excitement of a show. This is also an excellent opportunity for members to practice showing and fitting their beef animal.

The freeze branding and weigh-in is going to be at the York Fairgrounds on April 19.

The Spring Judging Contest, which is open to 4-H'ers, will be on April 12 at Penn State University. April 26, the Little International will be at Penn State. This is

sponsored by the Block and Bridle Club at the university. Animals owned by Penn State are groomed and fitted by university students. This is an excellent opportunity to see great showmen and fitters.

Changes in upcoming show dates for regional shows were announced. They are: Eastern National-September 26 to October 1, and Keystone International Livestock Expo-October 2 to 8.

Glen Kean, Penn State, gave a talk on agri-business and college careers.



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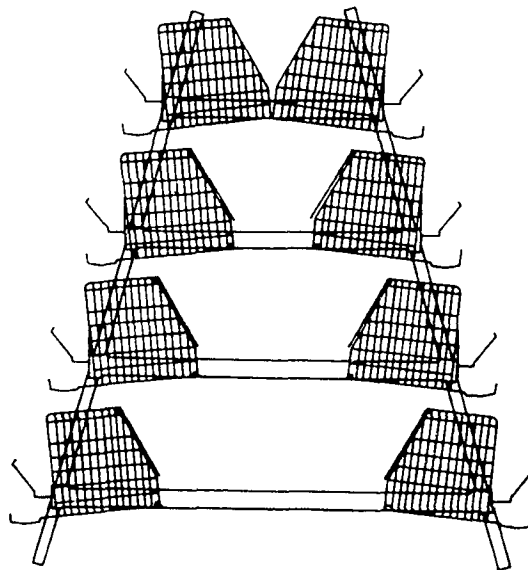
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