

*Herbicide Restrictions*

2-4-5T formulations contain traces of a highly active chemical which produce abnormalities in the young of treated laboratory rats and mice. The Food and Drug Directorate, Department of National Health and Welfare, which advises the Department of Agriculture on health aspects of pesticides regulated under the Pest Control Products Act, has concluded that the use of 2-4-5T around the home, in recreational areas, and around water and food crops could constitute a significant hazard to health.

There is no evidence suggesting that the regular use of 2-4-5T since 1948, when the weed killer was introduced, has caused adverse effects in man or animals. Also, no effects have been revealed by calving records for herds from ranges treated with 2-4-5T. However, in view of the potential seriousness of the effects demonstrated in laboratory animals, and the availability of alternative materials, it is considered prudent to minimize possible exposure of women in the childbearing years by withdrawing 2-4-5T formulations from use around homes, aquatic and recreational areas, as well as on food crops.

The members of the general public possessing 2-4-5T formulations could dispose of them with their regular garbage. 2-4-5T degrades in moist conditions and in the soil quite readily, and should not cause any problems when incorporated into municipal garbage dumps. Labels of all pesticides list the active ingredients and these will show 2-4-5T if present.

**Mr. Cliff Downey (Battle River):** Mr. Speaker, all members of this House welcome any move by the government which will lessen the degree of pollution which constitutes one of the major hazards to civilization today. However, a word of caution must be voiced because, in view of the current publicity that pollution is receiving, we could well be stampeded into withdrawing agricultural chemicals from the market which, while doing a small amount of harm, do a great amount of good.

I believe anyone who is familiar with the agricultural industry can easily understand that if agricultural chemicals were withdrawn entirely from the market, Canadian food production could be cut by half or one-third. The results would be equally as disastrous as the small degree of pollution that these chemicals create. It is clearly a fine line to tread. However, with these reservations, I commend the minister on his statement.

**Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I regret that my colleague, the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar (Mr. Gleave), is not in the House today because he raised this matter on April 21 and 27, and on May 12. I say on his behalf, and on behalf of my colleagues, that we welcome the statement of the minister concerning the additional restrictions that have been applied to this chemical.

There are some contradictions in the statement. This is a further example of a government that continues to lock the barn door not only after the horses have gone but also the cows, pigs and chickens. The announcement points out a number of areas in which we are deficient in development, use and handling of pesticides and herbicides. In addition to these restrictions, the minister, his department and other departments concerned must prevent manufacturers from marketing such substances until after the most thorough research on the effect of these substances, no matter how long it takes.

The pesticide and herbicide industry is allowed to continue developing new products. For all we know, another product could be announced tomorrow which would be marketed after only limited research. This research is conducted to the degree that it benefits the manufacturer. The public interest is thought of last. For far too long, developers have been allowed to market products after a minimum amount of research. We still do not know enough about the long-term effects of this substance and many others. It is incumbent upon the departments of government concerned to carry out this research and to require manufacturers to do similar research before a product is marketed.

As I have already said, there are contradictions in the statement. One contradiction is that the minister stated this weed killer caused no adverse effects in man or animals, but in the next paragraph he stated there were adverse effects on the mice tested in laboratories. I thought that mice were animals. According to the Department of Agriculture, they are not.

One point in the minister's statement which causes a great deal of concern is that members of the public possessing 2-4-5T can dispose of it in their regular garbage. When the government banned the further use of DDT, the government was trying to peddle its stocks to the public by calling for tenders until persuaded to withdraw them. The public is now being told they can throw this stuff out in their garbage. This is a most sloppy,