



# AGRICULTURAL CHEMICALS BOARD

Tel. 720 367

Box 1500 Wellington, NEW ZEALAND

In reply please quote .....AC 3/1/1.....



February 10 1981

TO: All Board Members

2,4-D

Further to my letter dated February 3 I have just received the attached cable from NZ Embassy Ottawa relating to the press release issued by Agriculture Canada.

(B.B. Watts)  
Registrar

Enc.

7

1 - 4/11/48

UNCLAS 4 FEBRUARY 1981

FROM OTTAWA

TO WELLINGTON 110

ROUTINE

FEB 5 1981

2,4-D : ACTION BY CANADA

YOUR 122.

2. FOLLOWING IS PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY AGRICULTURE CANADA CONCERNING MEASURES AIMED AT PHASING OUT SOME 2, 4-D HERBICIDE PRODUCTS. ORMROD (PESTICIDES SECTION AGCANADA) TOLD US THAT WORDS IN 4TH PARAGRAPH, NAMELY "OF TECHNICAL ESTERS OF 2, 4-D THAT HAVE BEEN SHOWN TO CONTAIN DIOXIN" WERE CAREFULLY CHOSEN TO INDICATE THAT ONLY THE SALE OF THOSE TECHNICAL ESTERS WHICH, AS A RESULT OF TESTING, WERE FOUND TO CONTAIN DIOXIN IS BANNED. ORMROD ALSO MENTIONED TO US THAT HE WOULD BE PLEASED TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE CONCERNING THRE PRESS RELEASE.

OTTAWA, JANUARY 27, 1981 -- AGRICULTURE MINISTER EUGENE WHELAN TODAY OUTLINED MEASURES AIMED AT PHASING OUT SOME 2,4-D HERBICIDE PRODUCTS.

LAST OCTOBER, MR WHELAN ANNOUNCED THAT AGRICULTURE CANADA SCIENTISTS HAD DISCOVERED THAT SOME TYPES OF THE POPULAR WEEDKILLER WERE CONTAMINATED WITH DIOXINS.

THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT FORMS OF DIOXIN. THE MOST TOXIC FORM -- 2,3,7,8-TCDD -- WAS NOT FOUND IN ANY 2,4-D SAMPLES TESTED.

THE MEASURES OUTLINED TODAY ARE:

- AN IMMEDIATE BAN ON THE SALE BY BASIC MANUFACTURERS OF TECHNICAL ESTERS OF 2,4-D THAT HAVE BEEN SHOWN TO CONTAIN DIOXINS:
- A PHASING OUT OF ALL SALES OF A VOLATILE FORM OF ESTER-BASED 2,4-D CALLED BUTYL ESTER. DEPARTMENTAL STUDIES HAVE IDENTIFIED CONCERNS OVER RAPID EVAPORATION AND DRIFT OF SUCH PRODUCTS, LEADING TO POSSIBLE DAMAGE TO NON-TARGET CROPS:
- ACTION TO ENSURE THAT ALL 2,4-D MATERIAL IS FREE OF DIOXIN CONTAMINATION BY 1982.

012476

A9 CHEM  
A-1

"WE ARE EXTREMELY ENCOURAGED BY THE COMPLIANCE ALREADY SHOWN BY INDUSTRY WITH OUR MEASURES," MR WHELAN SAID. "BASIC MANUFACTURERS HAVE ALREADY RESPONDED WITH A VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL OF ALL TECHNICAL ESTERS TO PERMIT A MORE DETAILED EVALUATION."

"WE REALIZE THAT THESE MEASURES WILL NOT ENSURE THAT ONLY DIOXIN-FREE 2,4-D IS USED THIS SEASON," MR WHELAN SAID. "OUR AIM IS TO PHASE INTO COMPLETELY UNCONTAMINATED PRODUCTS BY NEXT YEAR. IN THE INTERIM, USERS MUST RECOGNIZE THIS NEW SITUATION. IT SIMPLY IS NOT PHYSICALLY POSSIBLE TO PHASE INTO COMPLETELY DIOXIN-FREE 2,4-D THIS YEAR."

"I CAN'T EMPHASIZE ENOUGH THE VALUE OF 2,4-D TO CANADIAN AGRICULTURE," HE SAID. "ABOUT EIGHT MILLION POUNDS IS USED IN CANADA EACH YEAR, THE BULK OF IT TO CONTROL WEEDS THAT WOULD OTHERWISE DRASTICALLY REDUCE OUR CROP YIELDS."

MR WHELAN EXPLAINED THAT BECAUSE AGRICULTURE CANADA WAS THE FIRST AGENCY IN THE WORLD TO DISCOVER DIOXIN CONTAMINATION OF 2,4-D, THERE WAS INCOMPLETE INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON WHAT THE PRESENCE OF DIOXINS MEANS IN TERMS OF HEALTH. SCIENTISTS IN AGRICULTURE CANADA'S FOOD PRODUCTION AND INSPECTION BRANCH MADE THE DISCOVERY, USING STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGY. THE FINDING WAS MADE PUBLIC AT AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DIOXINS IN ROME LAST OCTOBER.

BASED ON PRESENT KNOWLEDGE, HEALTH AND WELFARE CANADA EXPERTS BELIEVE THAT THE TYPES OF DIOXIN FOUND ARE MUCH LESS TOXIC THAN THE 2,3,7,8-TCDD RECENTLY FOUND IN HERRING GULL EGGS AND CONSIDERED TO BE EXTREMELY DANGEROUS.

"WE ARE ANXIOUS TO DO ALL WE POSSIBLY CAN TO MAKE SURE THAT ALL 2,4-D PRODUCTS ARE FREE OF DIOXIN CONTAMINATION AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE," MR WELAN SAID. "WE HAVE WORKED IN CONSULTATION WITH FEDERAL COLLEAGUES IN HEALTH AND WELFARE CANADA AND ENVIRONMENT CANADA AS WELL AS PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH DEPARTMENTS."

- AGRICULTURE CANADA TESTS FOUND THAT 2,4-D PRODUCTS BASED ON BASIC MATERIAL CALLED ESTERS ARE OFTEN CONTAMINATED WITH DIOXINS. THE MAJORITY OF THE MORE COMMON PRODUCTS BASED ON MATERIALS CALLED AMINES ARE DIOXIN-FREE, THE TESTS SHOWED.

PAGE 3/119

MOST 2,4-D USED IN AGRICULTURE IS AMINE BASED.

ALL HOME-AND-GARDEN PRODUCTS ARE BASED ON AMINE MATERIAL. LABELS CLEARLY IDENTIFY WHETHER THE PRODUCT IS AMINE OR ESTER BASED.

"I REALIZE THAT THESE MEASURES WILL NOT PLEASE EVERYBODY," MR WHELAN SAID. "IT SIMPLY IS NOT POSSIBLE TO PHASE INTO COMPLETELY DIOXIN-FREE 2,4-D THIS YEAR. WE DO HOWEVER HAVE EVERY CONFIDENCE THAT THIS OBJECTIVE WILL BE REACHED NEXT YEAR.

"A COMPLETE BAN ON CONTAMINATED FORMS OF 2,4-D WOULD HAVE RESULTED IN DRASTIC SHORTAGES OF THE WEEDKILLER, AND THAT IN TURN WOULD HAVE JEOPARDIZED OUR FARMERS' ABILITY TO PRODUCE FOOD.

"WE FEEL THAT THESE MEASURES EFFECTIVELY RESPOND TO THE NEW INFORMATION THAT EMERGED LAST FALL, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME ENSURE CONTINUED LEVELS OF CROP PRODUCTION," MR WHELAN SAID. "AS WITH ALL PESTICIDES, ALL USERS ARE REMINDED TO CAREFULLY FOLLOW LABEL DIRECTIONS WHEN USING 2,4-D PRODUCTS."

=  
12476

DIRECTOR GENERAL AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES

176/11/78



# AGRICULTURAL CHEMICALS BOARD

Tel. 720 367

Box 1500 Wellington, NEW ZEALAND

AC 4/15/10

In reply please quote .....

November 11 1980

*↓*  
*[Signature]*

Mr M.N. Bates  
Department of Health  
P.O. Box 5013  
WELLINGTON

## BIOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF 2,4-D IN HUMAN BEINGS AND ANIMALS

C... I attach for your perusal a copy of a literature survey on the above conducted by Dr Dieter Riedel of Health and Welfare Canada. Dr Riedel has sent me a copy of this literature survey which you will see is not for publication, not for quotation and not for copying. You may wish to peruse this after which I would be pleased if you could return it to me.

*B Watt,*

(B.B. Watts)  
Registrar



Copy returned to BBW.

23/1/81

*[Signature]*

7

13 February 1961

✓  
The Registrar  
Agricultural Chemicals Board  
P. O. Box 1500  
WELLINGTON

Dear Sir

DIOXINS IN CHLOROPHENOLS AND 2,4-D

... I attach, as requested, a copy of a memo from Agriculture Canada announcing a prohibition of certain uses of pentachlorophenol.

As mentioned in our recent telephone conversation it would seem a good idea for the Advisory Committee on Pesticide Hazards to review the issue of dioxin compounds in 2,4-D and pentaachlorophenol with a view to establishing standards of purity for these materials.

Yours faithfully

M N Bates  
for Director  
Division of Public Health

Encl

7 u

BDW/JFC  
AC 4/15/7, v. 10

AC 4/15/7

March 27 1980

Dr W.P. Cochran  
Food Production and Inspection Branch  
Laboratory Services Division  
Plant Products Building  
No. 22 Carling Avenue  
Agriculture Canada  
Ottawa  
Ontario K1A 0C5  
CANADA

Dear Dr Cochran

Thank you for your letter of March 14 reference 834.31811 regarding the investigation of 2,4-D for a number of dioxins. This information is most helpful to me and I wonder whether you could supply me with the results of your examination for the possibility of hexa-, hepta-, and octa-chlorodioxins when these are available.

Thank you too for sending me copies of the translated version of the Swedish paper. I have written to Dr Riedel asking for his assessment on this work.

Yours sincerely

W

(B.B. Watts)  
Registrar

February 13 1980

Dr W.P. Cochrane  
Laboratory Services Division  
Plant Products Building  
No. 22 C.E.F.  
Ottawa  
Ontario K1A 0C5  
CANADA

Dear Dr Cochrane

Thank you for your letter of August 24 and your assistance with information on the analysis for dioxin. I passed this on to Dr Pat Holland of the Ministry and I can advise that at this stage because of a number of factors we have decided not to proceed further with dioxin analysis in meat fat.

The Health Department have just received a copy of a Swedish paper which suggests that 2,4-D may be carcinogenic and there is a suggestion that it is possibly because of the impurities such as the chlorinated dibenzodioxins or dibenzofurans that in almost all cases were part of the commercial preparations. I believe that you are carrying out an investigation into the dioxins which may be present in 2,4-D and I wonder whether you have any results or preliminary results of your study which you could pass to me.

In New Zealand the 2,4,5-T controversy is growing particularly with the confusion about Agent Orange and the general fact that the public don't seem to want to be able to grasp the scientific facts but seem to be mostly concerned in the emotive issues. If 2,4,5-T falls due to public concern I guess the next compounds will be the other phenoxy's particularly 2,4-D.

Thank you for any assistance you can give me.

Yours faithfully

(B.B. Watts)  
Registrar