

DRAFT PREPAREDNESS STATEMENT
RE: NITRO PLANT EPIDEMIOLOGICAL STUDY

February 12, 1979

The following statement is not for News Release
but may be used to respond to press inquiries only.

Monsanto Company announced today that it is conducting a follow-up health study on a group of employees and former employees known to have been inadvertently exposed to a toxic chemical during a process accident in 1949.

During the accident these employees were exposed to the chemical, tetra-chloro-dibenzo-dioxin, commonly known as TCDD or "dioxin," when a tri-chloro-phenol autoclave rupture disc blew. As a result, some 114 employees developed a skin disorder, known as chloracne, and were treated by four Charleston, W. Va., dermatologists. Thirty-seven of these employees were subsequently referred to Dr. Raymond Susskind, a consulting dermatologist at the University of Cincinnati and were treated between 1949 and 1953.

In the ensuing years no known long term health effects from this incident have been detected as a result of physical examinations offered regularly as part of Monsanto's ongoing health monitoring program.

Nevertheless, in August of last year, Monsanto decided to launch an in-depth follow-up study for several reasons:

- 1) In view of mounting international concerns regarding dioxin exposure, the company felt it had a responsibility to take this additional precaution to ensure that its ongoing program had not missed something.

CONFIDENTIAL
C07503

- 2) Monsanto also felt it had the opportunity, by doing this detailed study some 30 years after exposure, to hopefully answer for the world's scientific community some nagging medical questions regarding whether or not dioxin causes long term health effects.

Dr. Susskind is assisting Monsanto's own medical examiners in the conduct of this study which is expected to take about _____ months to complete. The findings and results will be made public as soon as possible.

-o0o-

CONFIDENTIAL

C07504