Message

From: PEIRCE, BOB [AG/1000] [/O=MONSANTO/OU=NA-1000-01/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=819117]
Sent: 7/15/2010 6:53:06 PM
To: HELSCHER, THOMAS M [AG/1000] [thomas.m.helscher@monsanto.com]; KAMPELMAN, BEN [AG/1000] [ben.kampelman@monsanto.com]; COMBEST, JOHN C [AG/1000] [john.c.combest@monsanto.com]
Subject: RE: 2,4-D, Agent Orange and Roundup weed resistance

My contact at Dow, who is in Switzerland, manages the AO issue, but not these other issues. I wonder if we ought to reach out to Dow on this? This is the kind of thing that starts small but can grow, as the new Baltimore alternative newspaper story attests. One thing I don't know for certain (but expect it must be true) is whether dioxin has been eliminated as a waste product from the manufacture of 2,4-D. Bob

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From: HELSCHER, THOMAS M [AG/1000]
Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2010 1:25 PM
To: PEIRCE, BOB [AG/1000]; KAMPELMAN, BEN [AG/1000]; COMBEST, JOHN C [AG/1000]
Subject: RE: 2,4-D, Agent Orange and Roundup weed resistance

I hope Dow goes directly to Pollack – you know 2,4-D herbicides are widely used globally and have been for decades; you know that the health issue with AO relates to dioxin, which has been effectively eliminated as an unwanted byproduct of 2,4-D manufacture for decades; why are you choosing to make a connection of our new crop technology with Agent Orange – it seems like disparaging and unnecessary sensationalism to us, but we would like to understand where you are coming from.

From: PEIRCE, BOB [AG/1000]
Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2010 11:43 AM
To: KAMPELMAN, BEN [AG/1000]; COMBEST, JOHN C [AG/1000]; HELSCHER, THOMAS M [AG/1000]
Subject: 2,4-D, Agent Orange and Roundup weed resistance

Ben, John and Tom,

We are seeing a number of stories that look at Dow's 2,4-D product for combating glyphosate weed resistance and then equate that to spraying Agent Orange on farmland. Andy Pollock made the connection that 2,4-D was a component of Agent Orange. This attached article written by an associate professor of philosophy at a Maryland university takes it one step further and says Dow proposes spraying Agent Orange on farmland. He then goes into the health impacts alleged with Agent Orange. (He may have been influenced by the NY Times article.)

Agent Orange, of course, was a combination of two long-time and commonly used agricultural chemicals...the health issue was dioxin which was a contaminant at the time in the manufacture of 2,4-D.

As the discussion of combating weed resistance moves forward, this argument that the industry is proposing spraying Agent Orange -- or a component of Agent Orange -- on farmland to combat Roundup weed resistance will become more common, at least by those who are arguing that weed resistance is causing the industry to turn to older, high risk herbicides. Dow's development of corn and soybeans resistant to 2,4-D increases the public affairs challenge. Our Q&A's on Dicamba deliberately do not throw 2,4-D under the bus, so to speak, but the question of why Dow is developing 2,4-D –tolerant plants seems like a likely media question that Dow will have to answer. Translation: why are you developing plants that are tolerant to Agent Orange?

The attached article was in an alternative newspaper (see below), but the comparison to Agent Orange was also used in the New York Times.

Bob

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