coreserv

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Category - Chemical Process Industries

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Latest chemical to come under scrutiny of FDD is polychlorinated biphenyls, and the industry will know within 30 days if there are biochemical effects from PCB on food supplies such as fish and aquatic birds. Preliminary animal studies started six weeks ago by the FDD revealed presence of PCB up to 100 parts per million. What suppliers like Monsanto will want to know, and what FDD will discover, is if PCB's present are the result of metabolites produced as a result of other processes (for example, wherever DDT residue has been found, PCB's have also been present. Researchers surmise that PCB's in this instance could be the result of metabolic change to the biphenyl), or if the residue is a compound on its own. If tests uncover a PCB build-up in fish and aquatic birds, FDD will have to decide what levels are considered injurious to human health. So far established is that 100 PPM has no directly harmful effects on fish except for fingerlings or young fish.

Monsanto, largest supplier of PCB in Canada and USA and some European companies, will be strongest hit if FDD here or FDA in USA makes a ruling on PCB use. It will take at least two years to determine what levels of PCB build-up in animals are injurious to human health. But should the results favor banning PCB's, the industry will have to come up with a substitute. Already PCB's have been identified as present in aquatic birds by Ontario Research Foundation researcher Dr. Lincoln Reynolds. Although there has been some dispute on this point, the commercial grades of PCB have been indentified as present. (Polychlorinated biphenyls with 3, 4, and 6 chlorine-molecules have been identified in ORF tests of aquatic life). Other tests have identified plastics, paints, resins, rubber as likely industrial sources.

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