

PRESS QUERY

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SUBJECT: PCBs

REPORTER & MEDIA: Monica Jensen
Canadian National Television Network
DATE & TIME: Montreal, Quebec, Canada
Oct. 8, 1975, 11 a.m.
QUERY AND RESPONSE:

Handwritten: R, Answered by Leg, M

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- Q: When did Monsanto first voluntarily restrict PCB sales to closed-system applications?
- A: Monsanto began to withdraw from open system markets in early 1970.
- Q: Why was this decision made and how was it announced.
- A: It was made after scientific investigations using new and totally unique analytical techniques first confirmed the presence of PCBs in the environment in the U.S. and long before information regarding this potential hazard was available. Our restricted sales policy was announced in a Monsanto news release dated July 16, 1970.
- Q: Was this information picked up and used widely by the news media?
- A: I really can't tell you to what extent it was used. I think it's fair to assume that it was widely carried, however.
- Q: Has Monsanto cooperated with federal agencies in the U.S. on the PCB issue?
- A: Yes. Our restricted sales program was reviewed and supported by a U.S. Federal Interdepartment Task Force.

SOURCE OF ANSWER:

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MONS 057031

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Q: Could you bring me up to date on the Japanese incident?

A: According to the U.S. FDA, which investigated the so-called "Yoshu Incident," there were no deaths attributed to this incident. The FDA reported that in 1968, about 1,000 people, who had consumed rice oil contaminated with PCB as a result of an unfortunate industrial accident, exhibited symptoms of dizziness, nausea, loss of appetite, weakness and dermatological side effects. Babies, mothers who had been exposed to the rice oil, were born with a darkened skin but, in every case, this condition cleared within three months.

Q: Did Monsanto experience a sizeable economic setback when you restricted sales to closed systems?

A: Let me answer that this way. Just prior to implementing our restricted program, PCBs were a growing 80 million-pound-per-year worldwide business for Monsanto. The restricted sales program effectively reduced our production to approximately 40 million-pounds-per-year.

Reporter: Thank you. You have been most helpful. I'll call you again should I need to discuss this further.

Source of Answer:

Handled By:

Files and Approved Q&A

D. R. Bishop