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Farm unsanitary, PCB maker says

BAD AXE (AP) — A Huron County farmer suing the Monsanto Co. about PCB contamination had been ordered by the state to clean up unsanitary conditions on his dairy farm, a company lawyer says.

Roger Haley was cross-examined Thursday as testimony continued in the Haley family's $4.3 million lawsuit against Monsanto and two silo builders. Huron County Circuit Judge M. Richard Knoblock recessed the trial until Monday.

Haley and his family claim they suffered poor health and financial losses because their farm products were contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls made by Monsanto and used in a sealant on his farm silos.

Monsanto claims Haley's losses were due to poor management. Company lawyer William Jungerheld said a 1966 state inspection report showed no milking operation violations before Haley purchased the farm near Owendale, but that later reports listed several deficiencies in the operation after Haley moved onto the farm in April 1972.

A state milk inspector also warned Haley about high bacteria levels in his raw dairy milk in September 1972, Jungerheld told the nine-woman jury. He said the report also told Haley to remove garbage from the dairy operation and clean walls and ceilings in the milking area.

Haley had testified previously that he began losing cattle and suffering a drop in milk production in fall of 1972.

Jungerheld also cited an April 1974 report that said Haley needed to clean a milk storage tank and a February 1974 report said that teets and udders on the farmer's cattle were not being sanitized properly.

The lawsuit seeks $325,000 in damages for loss of value to the home. Jungerheld on Thursday cited a bank loan application Haley made in December 1981 in which he listed the value of the 125-acre farm at $387,000. Haley testified that the figure was based on market values of surrounding farms, but that he would not be able to sell his farm for that amount.

The St. Louis-based Monsanto manufactured PCBs marketed under the name APO-CLOR 1254, which was used in silo sealants by Michigan Silo Co. and C&B Silo Co., both of Charlotte.

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