

BCC: Mr. E. V. John
Mr. J. J. Spano

July 22, 1970

PERSONAL

Mr. Richard J. Pothier
Science Writer
The Miami Herald
1 Herald Plaza
Miami, Florida 33101

Dear Mr. Pothier:

A friend mailed me a copy of Saturday's editorial page and I want you to know we're grateful for the headline over my letter and your reply.

"PCB 'Not Poison,' Says Monsanto" was meant to be facetious, I'm sure, but it's still the truth despite your mention of its past use in pesticides.

Monsanto is required by law to label as a poison any chemical the government decrees a poison. We have never been asked to label PCB in this manner.

I understand that those few pesticide manufacturers who used PCB in their products did so for two reasons: to extend the effectiveness of their material by slowing down evaporation and to make it a bit tacky. PCB was not present as a poisonous ingredient.

You cite PCB as being used alone as a pesticide. Any oil-like substance will kill insects when properly sprayed. Kerosene has been used in this manner for years. Tiny droplets of any oily substance kills insects by clogging their breathing systems. I'm sure one could kill bugs by spraying them with salad oil!

We've both had our say now. Your readers will think you've justified your earlier story and I've had the chance to correct some misconceptions and perhaps to demonstrate that everything isn't the way it appears to be.

Cordially,

DSW 282011

James E. McKee Jr.
Assistant Director

STLCOPCB4063339