

Monsanto

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FROM
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DATE : June 30, 1983

SUBJECT : Impressions from CDC Conference on
a "Dioxin" Action Level

REFERENCE :

TO : Memo to File

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1. The CDC, at least Drs. Houk et al, does not seem comfortable with using epidemiological evidence to gauge human risk from TCDD exposure. "You don't know the dose" is their constant refrain. Al Young was present (as an "observer"), prepared to disclose some preliminary results from the "Ranch Hand" study, but Houk told him not to talk about it. (Houk wanted the results in written form first.) It seems extremely important to me that we develop a credible estimate of the dose received by those exposed in industrial settings as soon as we can, to support our belief that exposures in the μ /day range do not harm people. We should then share the results with the CDC, EPA, the participants in this exercise, and NIOSH, and submit them for publication.
2. From the group chosen and the conduct of the session, several of us came away with the feeling that the unstated purpose was to substantiate CDCs "1 ppb" action level. If so, it was not entirely successful: Norton Nelson, Bob Harris, and others told Houk in no uncertain terms that CDC needs to consider exposure scenarios other than the "child eating dirt" one that this standard is based on. They reluctantly agreed, finally.
3. CDC is feeling its way, awkwardly, toward a satisfactory way to fulfill their CERCLA responsibilities. They still have far to go.
4. Dr. Thomas Milby, a consultant to Pacific Gas and Electric, suggested that useful dose-response relationships can be inferred from Yushio data, especially that reported in a 1979 Bull. Env. Contam. Tox. article. He is of the opinion that chlorodibenzofurans caused the effects reported, and that these closely resemble effects from TCDD exposure. He sees no causes for concern.
5. Among the "observers" were people from both Missouri and New Jersey public health and environmental departments and lawyers from Dow's and Traveler's outside counsels.

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