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24300 MEADOWSBROOK, NOVI, MI 48050, (313) 478-4148

FOR MONSANTO

*cc: J. D. Caldwell - CMC
Jill Wellington - CMC*

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PROGRAM News Five

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CITY Saginaw

OUT OF COURT SETTLEMENTS REACHED

LORNA BARRETT: Well three thumb area families have reached out of court settlements with a silo company over PCB contaminated feed and livestock. The families claim, the C&B Silo Company is responsible for the contamination. They were seeking an undetermined amount of monetary damages. The settlements came just before a jury was to begin deliberations after hearing three weeks of testimony.

JIM KIERTZNER: The two Huron County families who lost farm business and suffered serious health problems because of PCB contamination silos, settled out of court with the C&B Silo Company. After eleven years of waiting for the case to finally go to trial and then three weeks of testimony, the two sides agreed to a settlement right before the case was to go to the jury. As Jill Wellington reports, it was a long haul for everyone.

JILL WELLINGTON: This farm in Pigeon has been in the Schultz family for four generations, Dale and Christine added dairy cows in 1977 but milk production always fell well below the state average. They found out it was because of the PCB contaminated silos that used to stand right here.

DALE SCHULTZ: Within two years after we went to alternate feeding and eliminated the silos our production was up 4,000, to about 1,000 pounds over the state average.

WELLINGTON: The Schultz's also had over average illnesses.

CHRISTINE SCHULTZ: --problems, thyroid problems, rashes, infections that wouldn't heal, cancer, pituitary tumor.

WELLINGTON: Ron and Debbie Heiser of Port Austin were to be the next to go on trial for the same types of problems. They said their silo, which the state still hasn't removed caused the family health problems and lost dairy herd.

DEBBIE HEISER: We no longer milk cows because of cash crop and my husband has a tiling business and we have just sought other ways to make means.

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WELLINGTON: The Heisers also settled out of court today. What was the settlement?

DALE CUBITT: Well, we have agreed that we would not reveal the figures, but all I can say is that it wasn't peanuts.

WELLINGTON: Huron County Judge Richard Kanoblock(?) is happy he doesn't have to hear another PCB silo trial.

RICHARD KANOBLOCK: Additionally, obviously since the parties agreed to the terms of the settlement there will be no appeal, so the cases are finally resolved.

WELLINGTON: The cases may be resolved but?

CHRISTINE: It's not over really, you know, in your heart, because that's taken a lot out of us.

WELLINGTON: Jill Wellington, News Five in Huron County.

KIERTZNER: This lawsuit originally included the MONSANTO COMPANY which produced the PCB contaminated sealant used on the silos, but it settled out of court. Another silo company was dismissed by the judge. C&B officials were unavailable for comment today.