BC: J. E. McKee
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Monsanto

PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

Monsanto Company
800 N. Lindbergh Boulevard
St. Louis, Missouri 63166
Phone (314) 694-1000

October 9, 1980

Mr. Doug Foster
Salinas Californian
123 W. Alisal Street
P.O. Box 1091
Salinas, California 93901

Dear Mr. Foster:

I've just seen a copy of your article, "The PCB Poisoning That Wasn't," from the September 6 edition of The Californian and want to share with you a few facts about PCBs.

In the first place, Monsanto "dropped production" in 1977 after announcing that intention a year earlier, solely because of environmental concerns.

As the attached fact sheet states, PCBs are not cancer-causing and they are far from being "one of the most dangerous chemicals ever produced.

I hasten to add that your confusion is understandable and, indeed, rather widely held by the press -- thanks largely to the EPA.

For years the government singled out PCBs as the symbolic example of why the country needed tough new laws to control toxic substances. In the process, the hazards of PCBs were greatly exaggerated and several myths resulted.

I did enjoy your article, and congratulate you for resisting the temptation to run with a "grabber" before the facts were in. I only wish more journalists would exercise this responsible dedication to accuracy first -- but then 60 Minutes and 20/20 might be out of business!

If you'd like more information on PCBs, just let me know.

Sincerely,

Dan R. Bishop
Director, Environmental Communications

DRB:ec

Attachments