

Scientist Says Pesticides May Influence Evolution

CORVALLIS (Special) — Game pesticide investigator, said efforts to keep pesticides from flowing into coastal waters had proved successful in his home state since 1963, when thousands of fish were killed.

Dr. Denzel E. Ferguson, Mississippi State College zoologist, told a symposium on the effects of pesticides that the chemicals "may interrupt or alter normal behavioral patterns and ecological relationships in ways, often subtle, that can determine future patterns of distribution and adaptive change."

Other scientists said some pesticides such as DDT could affect the central nervous system of animals and hence, their brains.

About 400 scientists from around the country attended the symposium, which continues through Wednesday.

Although Dr. Ferguson said no such chemicals had killed off species of animals, there was evidence that pesticides have cut down on populations of certain species.

Another speaker, Dr. Phillip Butler of the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries laboratory at Gulf Breeze, Fla., said oysters are an excellent organism to test the level of pesticides in coastal waters.

He said the oysters he has studied in all coastal states attracted the chemicals and became unhealthy but posed no threat to human beings who might eat them.

Eldridge G. Hunt, a California Department of Fish and

Game pesticide investigator, said efforts to keep pesticides from flowing into coastal waters had proved successful in his home state since 1963, when thousands of fish were killed.

However, he warned that "we are not out of the woods" because newly-developed chemicals are probable killers but have not been adequately studied.

Monday night, Gov. Tom McCall told the scientists at a banquet meeting that he would swear in a special committee on synthetic chemicals on Aug. 27 to study control of pesticides.

McCall said a "substantial" federal grant has been received to help the state devise new methods for handling, storage and disposal of pesticides.

DSW 433731

STLCOPCB4086839