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WARF Test Methods Challenged by DDT Foes

Journal Madison Bureau

Madison, Wis. – The attorney for anti-DDT forces in the natural resources department hearing on the pesticide spent Wednesday challenging testing procedures used by WARF Institute.

Francis Coon, head of the chemical department of the research arm of WARF (Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation), testified that plasticising agents called PCB's could interfere with tests for DDT or its cousins DDD and DDE.

Coon was cross examined Wednesday by Victor Yannacone, Patchogue, N. Y., attorney for Citizens Natural Resources association, which has asked for a ruling on whether DDT can be banned under Wisconsin water laws.

He said the laboratory did thousands of tests to analyze for DDT or its metabolites. Since it was learned in 1967 that PCB's could interfere, he said, it had notified clients of possible interference and advised them that further tests were possible.

He said that since 1967 the laboratory performed further tests on DDT and DDD.

However, he said it could not offer scientific assurance whether there was or was not interference with DDE, which earlier witnesses for Yannacone had called the most abundant global pollutant and a threat to reproduction in some wild birds.

Much of the testimony revolved around a chart of graphical readings from a gas chromatograph test device. They were made on a coho salmon for Atty. Willard S. Stafford, Madison. Stafford represents the DDT task force of the National Agricultural Chemicals association, which is defending the use of DDT.

The tests showed less DDT and DDD after PCB's were accounted for. Yannacone indicated that there were methods to further analyze DDE in the same way. Coon said there was much information about it in scientific literature, but WARF still was studying it.

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