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The misfortune of Loren A. Dillman, Pueblo County dairy farmer could be harmful to the health of Ohio's dairy industry. But that doesn't bother Dillman nearly as much as his fears about what it may be doing to the health of his family and to the health of his fellow men.

The misfortune; the state has put Dillman out of business because his milk is contaminated by a widely used chemical compound.

They were not wishing publicity on this. The state wanted to keep all hush-hush but no one knows what is going to be the over-all problem if you or I or our children are subjected to this thing. So, the need now is to get this to the people's attention the farmer says. The misfortune has many facets. There is the fact that Dillman is a dairy farmer in name only these days because he hasn't sold a drop of milk since Aug. 12. There is the fact that the Foods, Drugs and Dairies Division of the Ohio Department of Agriculture won't let him sell the milk. It's adulterated by a chemical compound known by its brand name, Aroclor 1254, and its chemical name, polychlorinated biphenyl

There is the fact that the milk is adulterated because the cows that produce it are contaminated by the chemical. There is the fact the cows were contaminated because they ate silage contaminated by the chemical. There is the fact the silage was contaminated because an epoxy sealing paint on the inner wall of a seven-year old silo broke down and released the chemical into the silage. There is the fact the polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs for short) have been identified as one of those manmade chemical compounds which, like DDT, somehow worked their way into the environment and are persistent about remaining there and accumulating.

There is the fact that little is known yet about long-range insidious effects of PCB on living things. But there is considerable evidence they can poison aquatic life, interfere with wildlife reproduction, accumulate in body fat, cause lesion in the liver and skin, induce vomiting and nausea when the dosage is severe, and kill if they damage the liver badly enough.

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There is the fact 20 Dillman calves died last winter, an unusually high mortality rate) and two adult cows died last summer of some kind of poisoning. A post mortem on one of the cows revealed its liver was heavily damaged and there was massive hemorrhaging in the stomach. Later testing found PCB residue in the animal's tissues. There is the fact the Dillmans butchered a steer and stored the meat in a freezer then decided to have it tested for PCB residue before they ate it. There is a concentration of PCB in the meat high enough to make it inedible. There is the fact Dillman's wife has a mouth infection which doctors cannot identify and there is the fact that PCB is involved.

There is the fact Dillman's son and partner, Bill, was hospitalized this year with colitis and now wonders if PCB contamination had anything to do with the intestinal infection. There is the fact the younger Dillman's 12-year-old son, Mike, is hospitalized with osteomyelitis (a bone infection) and some liver abnormalities and the family wonders if PCB contamination is related to that.

There is the fact that the elder Dillman is having muscular problems because his body will not assimilate Vitamin E properly and he wonders if PCB contamination has not contributed to that. And it has killed chickens and a field that we have been dumping the contaminated milk on and they hauled the contaminated silage out on is condemned indefinitely, Dillman says. We don't know how soon if ever we'll dairy again. My herd is ruined and ready for slaughtering at the time when its safe. We've got all these mysterious illnesses. I don't have any animosity because they shut off from shipping milk but I think they should stop footdragging because I think this is more serious than we have been ever told. The "they" on Dillman's mind are the Food Dairies and Drugs Division and the Monsanto Company, this country's sole producer of Aroclor 1254 or any PCB compound by anyother name. The dairy farmers complaints about a lack of speed concern is belief not enough is being done to determine the effects of how many other silos in Ohio and elsewhere may be causing food chain contamination as his was. I feel this is absolutely the poorest coordinated move to try to clear up something as I have ever seen, he said.

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Monsanto knew two years ago this stuff was dangerous. The state found the first contaminated silo way last February, yet they did nothing to notify any body. Lord only knows how many silos have been built containing this stuff. Nobody could care less how much they contaminate just so they make the almighty dollar. Both the state and Monsanto share Dillman's concern over the serious implications of PCB contamination but they firmly disagree with the suggestion there has been footdragging or that the milk adulteration situation poses any health hazard for the public.

There is one theme that should be in this says Dr. David A. Hill, chief of the Foods, Dairies and Drugs Division. Try not to scare hell out of the milk market. There is absolutely nothing wrong with Ohio's milk supply. Its being checked constantly and will continue to be checked constantly. Hill confirmed the first PCB contamination of milk was discovered early this year. The discovery apparently was the first in the nation he said. Ohio has for years been maintaining a surveillance testing program of milk offered for sale he notes. We have done it just to make certain there are no residues of pesticides or other chemicals in the milk. Periodically there have been herds not allowed to ship milk because of pesticide residue. But the Aroclor is a new problem this year. The division chief says there have been 4 or 5 dairy farmers thus far affected by the contamination. Each was ordered to cease all milk shipments until the PCB residue in their milk dropped to a safe for consumption tolerance level set by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration he says. All herds but Dillmans apparently sufficiently cleared their systems of the chemical to make their milk safe. Their owners (15) have resumed milk shipments. One of those herds owned by George Schwarzwalder of Big Prairie, a small community near Wooster. Schwarzwalder, who has filed a $125,000 damage suit against Monsanto and the Michigan Silo Co. of Massilon, recalls his situation well. He was ordered last February to stop shipping milk because an apparent DDT residue had been detected by the state's routine surveillance program. He was surprised because he had not used any DDT for 15 years he says. There had been other chemicals come along that were just as effective and not as persistent as DDT so he thought there was no reason to stay with that. But they checked his feed and found there was some kind of residue in the silage which they thought at first was DDT. Then after several tests that found reactions similar to DDT they concluded something else was involved.

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One test checked the silo coating which was cracking and peeling off and found it was highly contaminated. Schwarzwalder said his cows were taken immediately off the contaminated silage and put on other feeds. After 4 months the animals' systems were sufficiently cleared of the PCB to make his milk safe for shipment again.

Hill says the cows apparently rid their bodies of PCB through a natural process of consuming their own body fat. After a period off the silage, which is a high-protein diet, the animals are going to use up some of their own body resources to maintain production. Since they associate with the fat where the PCBs can accumulate, they lose weight and are excreting the PCB as they do so. Schwarzwalder says he, like Dillman, was completely cut off from his sole source of income while he waited for his herd to clear itself of the PCB. He says he also had an unusually high number of calves (almost 15) die last winter and he is now experiencing breeding problems with some of his cows. We have had much more problems during the last year than we ever had before. Some of it probably is coincidence but we do attribute the deaths to this Aroclor. We never had losses like that before he says. Schwarzwalder's attorney, Richard Kauffman, of Wooster, says the suit against Monsanto and the National Silo Company claims damages are due him for a 4 month loss of milk and herd. I claim Monsanto is liable on the basis the product and the resulting affects are solely their responsibility, Kauffman says. He has also proposed a satisfactory settlement would be for Monsanto to compensate Schwarzwalder for his milk loss then buy the farmer's entire herd and isolate the herd at the state's research center here in Wooster and feed it the contaminated silage and see what happens.

I think the only way anybody can tell what is really happening is take these contaminated herds and sacrifice them he says. I don't think people need to get frightened about this thing but its not the type of thing you play cozy with. This is something so blamed new on the scene that no one has had any opportunities to get into the work and get any of the answers yet he says. But we have tried not to leave any stone unturned. We did supply to the National Silo Association early in the game a letter stating what we had been running across in these silos so they could alert other silo companies throughout the U.S. as to what we had been encountering. We also supplied to all milk producer federations in Ohio basically the same information so they, in turn, could alert their individual member producers.

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And we have met with all surrounding states through the central states Food and Drug Association and appraised them of the Aroclor situation and what they could expect and we have alerted the Food and Drug officials of the U.S. and given them insight into what we have. Hill said the state has had ~~the~~ good cooperation from Monsanto in trying to determine the scope of the milk contamination situation. A spokesman for Monsanto's Organic Chemicals Division in St. Louis confirmed Monsanto scientists in contact with Ohio officials in the past and they agree with your state people's judgment that the levels at which the Aroclor residues have been found probably would not be harmful to humans. The levels would be so low so as not to affect humans, he said. The Monsanto spokesman also said the company first became aware of the possible hazards of the PCB compounds in 1966 through work being done by two Swedish scientists. And about two years we came up with a program to restrict the useof the product, he said. That program includes: Help to identify the [redacted] substances in the environment. Launching an annual feeding study to determine the toxicity of PCBs; alert all customers to handle this material with the greatest care and to be specifically watchful to see that none escapes into the environment. Take a critical look at the company's manufacturing process to assure that no PCBs escape into the environment via that process. Launching studies to determine if PCB compounds can be made biodegradable (decomposable). Developing alternate products which retain the functional characteristics of PCBs and are safe to the environment. Voluntarily deciding last August to withdraw the sale of PCB compounds for open-system uses.

The spokesman said interim findings from the feeding study indicate there appear to be no effects on the animals at all at various levels of intake. But, we voluntarily withdrew the product from sale to the open environment because we realized that all evidence pointed to the fact that the PCBs are persisting in the environment and building up in the environment, he said.

Hill says the number of dairy herds thus far affected by the PCB is too small to establish any averages that would help predict how long the chemical might remain in the animal's body. But the important thing is not the number of herds that have been affected he says. Its that its a tremendous problem to the herd involved.

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Heck fire, this is the dairy farmers only livelihood. We're sorry there is even one herd. We symphathize with them and do everything we can to help. Dillman agrees his involvement in the PCB problem has taken away his livelihood but he is not so certain the state really cares. We got a telephone call at 10 p.m. on Aug. 12 that our license would be suspended the next day because of a pesticide contamination he recalls. But since then they have told us nothing. All they have done is tell us we are kicked off. The Preble County dairy farmers figures he could lose as much as $30,000 before his herd is back in production. But, of that loss would be a $4,000 (insurance value) silo he has torn down because its contaminated and $6,000 he spent on construction of a new silo. The rest will be a loss in milk sales. Paul L. Maughan, membership relations manager, for the Miami Valley Milk Producers Association, says a dairy herd the size of Dillman's (an average of 40 cows in production at all times and over-all herd size of 100 head) normally produces about 30,000 pounds of milk a month. That would be about 3,488 gallons of milk on grocery shelves. Maughan said the PCB contamination of the Dillman herd and that of a nearby neighbor who was banned from shipping only a week are our first record of any milk in this area being involved in anything like this. There has been no contaminated milk in this area before. One of the Dillman family physicians, Dr. Joseph Zore, of Richmond, Indiana, says he can understand the family's fears and the PCB compound may be involved in some of the illness, especially because they had been drinking raw milk from their cows. But he personally don't think there is any connection between the infections or anything else he adds. The boy (12-year-old Mike) has a bone infection, osteomyelitis, which is fairly common as bone infections go. We did do a study of his liver because when we first came in he had diahrrea and there were some abnormalities.

That's where this chemical thing came into play and we do intend to send some specimens to Ohio State University and have them tested for this particular compound. But I don't know if they are going to be able to connect the two. Even if he has some in his body I don't think there is any connection. Still, though, you know I don't blame them. I am sure I'd do the same thing they are doing and go to bed at night and have some sleepless nights if these things were happening to me.

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