



The Point Is...

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A SUMMARY OF PUBLIC ISSUES IMPORTANT TO THE DOW CHEMICAL COMPANY

Why Defend 2,4,5-T?

Over the past decade, Dow has spent millions of dollars defending the herbicide 2,4,5-T from a continuous onslaught of emotional criticism. Often these attacks have been totally political in nature with science ignored or considered.

Having spent all that time and money, not to mention the best efforts of some of Dow's most talented researchers, Dow employees and shareholders may reasonably ask, *why?* Why expend such resources defending a product which contributes, at best, a meager share of the company's sales and none of the profits?

The expedient course of action, as in so many of the controversies of the day, would be to abandon the fight and divert those resources to the development of more profitable products which would (hopefully) be acceptable to those who oppose 2,4,5-T. Dow has chosen not to take the expedient course.

In terms of the embattled 2,4,5-T, the Dow strategy is based on the belief that chemicals are the real target — the foes of 2,4,5-T are just warming up for future attacks on other pesticides and then many other chemicals which are essential to maintaining and improving the quality of our lives.

At issue in the 2,4,5-T case is the presence of TCDD ("dioxin") in the herbicide. Dow scientists, on the basis of data from laboratory research and actual product use experience, believe that 2,4,5-T does not present an unreasonable human health hazard as normally utilized in agriculture

and vegetation management.

The Dow position is principally based on this key premise:

Science is the best and proper judge of the human health hazards of products introduced into commerce in this country. Hazard evaluations must be insulated from the politics of the day. Use of a product should be regulated by what scientific research has determined about its effects.

Dow is confident that the pendulum will ultimately swing against what has been called "pseudo-science" by Paul F. Orefice, Dow's president and chief executive officer. The newspaper article accompanying this commentary (over) is hopefully a sign of optimism — where a thorough scientific review reveals the shallowness of anti-chemical rhetoric.

The Point Is... *bad science* typified by the EPA's Alsea II report must always be challenged. It cannot be the basis for scientific conclusions or government regulatory actions. At issue is whether government agencies should rely on validated scientific data or emotional and anecdotal allegations in deciding the fate of a chemical product. In meeting this challenge, Dow must continue to defend the scientific data base supporting 2,4,5-T — recognizing that one day the family jewels may be jeopardized.

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