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MANUFACTURING CHEMISTS ASSOCIATION

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May 31, 1973

CONFIDENTIAL

To: FOOD ADDITIVE CONTACTS IN MCA MEMBER COMPANIES
FOOD, DRUG, AND COSMETIC CHEMICALS COMMITTEE

Subject: Hexachlorobenzene

Gentlemen:

It has come to our attention via the National Agricultural Chemicals Association that cattle have been quarantined in Louisiana due to high levels of HCB, that chemical plants in the area are suspected of being responsible for this, and that USDA believes the problem could very well be national.

The NACA information also includes the following:

1. The USDA residue surveillance program last December detected HCB residues in Louisiana cattle far in excess of the 0.3 ppm administrative guidelines set by USDA, and 215 square miles have come under state quarantine.
2. The only registered agricultural use for HCB is for seed treatment, but FDA tests for HCB in processed animal feed found no problem from this source.
3. USDA supplied soil and grass samples from the quarantined area to EPA, which found residues of HCB. (About 30 chemical plants are in the area, some producing products involving HCB. A land fill dump used by some chemical companies is also in the area, and samples from it showed HCB residues up to 5000 ppm.)
4. Louisiana cattlemen are anxious to have the source of the contamination identified, so they can press for damages and prevent a reoccurrence.
5. The Louisiana Department of Agriculture has requested immediate relief in the form of an interim tolerance that would let farmers market their livestock now.

ASI 00003279

6. EPA has been considering an interim tolerance with the condition that a 3-year chronic toxicity study be initiated at the time of issuance.

7. If the source of HCB residues is shown to be from pesticides, EPA will take enforcement action. If from industry, FDA will take this action.

8. USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has detected measurable residues of HCB in 50 out of 1000 of their meat samples taken on a national scale.

9. There are indications that this example may be cited as a reason why the toxic substances bill needs to be enacted.

The Executive Vice President of the Louisiana Chemical Association, Mr. Henri Wolbrette II, advises that the whole situation is confusing and extremely touchy, and that publicity at this time should therefore be avoided. He recommends that some sampling be done.

No action by MCA is contemplated. This report of the situation is sent to you as a matter of information. If you have any questions, I suggest you contact either the Washington office of the National Agricultural Chemicals Association (202/296-1585) or Mr. Wolbrette (504/525-5814).

Sincerely yours,


M. M. Hoover, Secretary
Food, Drug, and Cosmetic
Chemicals Committee

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