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MAR 6 1984

Monsanto PCB trial opens

BAD AXE, Mich. (AP) — Jury selection began Monday in a $4.3 million lawsuit filed against Monsanto Co. and three silo builders over PCB contamination of farm products.

Twenty-three of nearly 60 potential jurors were excused Monday morning by Huron County Circuit Judge M. Richard Knoblock, who is hearing the civil suit filed by the Roger A. Haley family of Owendale.

Jury selection was expected to continue through today, and Knoblock said opening arguments may begin Wednesday.

The Haleys claim feed for cows on their farm in Michigan's Thumb area about 110 miles north of Detroit was contaminated from storage in silos coated with a sealant containing PCBs.

Haley and his wife and three children also allege they have suffered ill health because they ate farm products tainted with PCBs.

PCBs, or polychlorinated biphenyls, were banned by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 1977 after tests linked them to liver cancer, reproductive failures and skin disorders in laboratory animals. But the ban came long after PCBs were used throughout Michigan to coat the insides of silos.

After learning milk from their dairy herd contained PCBs, the Haleys filed suit in 1977.

ADRIAN, MICH.
TELEGRAM
D. 16,980

MAR 8 1984

Jurors seated in PCB trial

BAD AXE, Mich. (AP) — Six jurors tentatively were seated Wednesday to hear a $4.3 million lawsuit filed against Monsanto Co. and three silo builders over PCB contamination of a Huron County farm family and their livestock.

Eight or nine people, including alternates, will hear testimony in a suit filed against Monsanto in 1977 by farmer Roger A. Haley and his family of rural Owendale.

While six jurors were chosen, attorneys for the parties in the suit had not used any of the challenges with which they may disqualify jurors. Thus, the lawyers said the jury selection process likely would continue through Thursday.

The Haleys filed suit against Monsanto, which manufactured polychlorinated biphenyls under the trade name ARO-CLOR 1254, and three silo builders — Michigan Silo Co., C&B Silo Co., and Concrete Silo Co. — which used the Monsanto product in a sealant for coating the inside of silos.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency banned agricultural use of PCBs in 1977 after tests linked the chemicals to a variety of ailments, including liver cancer. But PCBs were used widely in Michigan to seal the inside of silos in the 1940's through the 1960's, and those silos still remaining have been targeted by the state for disposal.

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