

Dispute Over Pesticides At Science Symposium

By Associated Press

CORVALLIS, ORE. — A dispute broke out Wednesday among some of the 450 scientists attending a symposium over whether pesticides should be banned and whether scientists should become involved in any fight to ban them.

Those who wanted prohibition argued that the effects of DDT and other pesticides still aren't known. Dr. Alvin M. Rezzing of Oklahoma City said, there may be subtle changes in our brains because of DDT that could change our behavior when under stress.

But others felt the benefits justified continued use.

Kenneth Walker of the Agricultural Research Service of the Department of Agriculture, said availability of food crops would be reduced from 25 to 30 per cent in three to five years if use of pesticides was discontinued altogether.

Last Friday the Agriculture Department announced a substantial curtailment in government use of DDT, saying that from now on it will use less persistent chemicals such

as chlordane wherever possible in federal-state insect control programs. A department spokesman said widespread public concern over pesticide use prompted the department action so that such programs could be studied more fully.

Dr. William F. Durham of the U.S. Public Health Service at Perrine, Fla., said use of DDT on insects that carry disease has saved at least five million lives and prevented 100 million illnesses.

An undercurrent running through the meeting at Oregon State University was whether scientists should permit themselves to become involved in what they feel has become a political question.

George Chadwick of the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife at Oregon State, declined Tuesday to answer a question about use of pesticides, saying the answer was for the politicians. The audience applauded.

Later that day, Dr. William P. Stephen, an Entomologist at Oregon State, took specific exception to Chadwick's remarks saying scientists ought to take a stand.

He also was applauded.

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