The News and Observer, Raleigh, N. C., Sun., Sept. 19, 1982

EPA flub gives away company's secret

WASHINGTON (UPI) — The Monsanto Co.'s secret formula for a profitable weed killer apparently fell into rival hands because of a bureaucratic error by the Environmental Protection Agency, it was reported Saturday.

The Washington Post said the EPA inadvertently disclosed the formula for the pesticide Roundup, which industry experts say is the largest-selling herbicide in the world, in response to a Freedom of Information Act request by a lawyer.

Monsanto of St. Louis received $450 million last year from the sale of herbicides, which accounted for nearly 40 percent of its profits.

The Roundup trade secrets were released in May to Clausen Ely Jr., a lawyer whose clients have included Monsanto rivals in pesticide and herbicide markets, The Post said.

Ely said he turned the documents over to one of his clients, whom he declined to identify.

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