

Monsanto

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Vice President

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October 1, 1990

Mr. Donald Clay
Assistant Administrator for Solid Waste
and Emergency Response
Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency
Waterside Mall
401 M Street, SW
Washington, DC 20460

RE: Monsanto Company Sponsored Health Studies

Dear Mr. Clay:

Earlier this year, an EPA employee on your staff, acting in her private capacity but utilizing the format of an intra-agency memorandum, forwarded to the EPA's Science Advisory Board accusations raised in an appellate brief filed in a private lawsuit involving Monsanto Company. The untrue allegations repeated in that memorandum referenced two health studies sponsored by Monsanto to examine any impact of possible exposure to dioxin in employees involved in the production of herbicides at Monsanto's Nitra, West Virginia plant. The allegations charged that the study results had deliberately under-reported cancer mortality. The gross inaccuracies of these charges have been the subject of prior correspondence to the Agency by myself and by Monsanto's Chairman, Richard Mahoney. Notwithstanding our efforts to correct the record, these baseless charges have been widely repeated in newspaper accounts and even before a Congressional Subcommittee where the charges were portrayed as fact, thus giving the incorrect impression that it is the government's view that the studies are misleading. Monsanto recognizes that the Agency did issue a corrective statement indicating that the employee was acting in her individual capacity, not as an Agency employee in preparing the memorandum, and that her memorandum does not reflect the Agency's official position. However, that statement has not remedied the problems caused by continual references to the accusations repeated in the memorandum which was prepared on Agency stationery.

In view of the inability of Monsanto to halt or correct the many erroneous reports with respect to these two studies and in view of the extreme prejudice being suffered by Monsanto and the individual scientists associated with the studies, Monsanto is compelled to request, in the strongest sense possible, that the United States Environmental Protection Agency, through the auspices of NIOSH, perform a complete audit on the two mortality studies (authored by Zach/Suskind and Zach/Geffey) referenced within the memorandum. Monsanto is confident that the audit will confirm the conclusions reached by the original scientists. The impartial action urged herein would serve to put an end to this false controversy. Absent such government action, Monsanto will continue to suffer damage to its reputation.

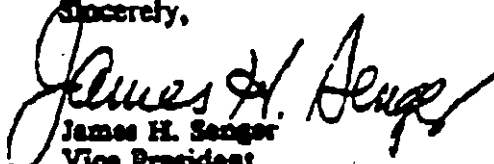
Given the Company's science-based focus, preservation of Monsanto's reputation for performing accurate world-class research is of critical importance to our business and research operations. Furthermore, since NIOSH is in the process of issuing study results based, in part, upon the same

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population involved in the two studies sponsored by Monsanto. It should be important for the government to remove any stigma improperly attached to NIOSH's work as a result of the earlier charges raised against the predecessor studies. In connection with NIOSH's Dioxin Registry Program, Monsanto has previously furnished NIOSH with complete data sets regarding the mortality experience of the Company's Nitro, West Virginia work force. It is believed that Dr. Marilyn Fingerhut at NIOSH has all the data necessary to perform an impartial, independent audit. If Monsanto can provide further assistance to facilitate completion of an audit, via furnishing any additional data, it would be happy to do so.

I wish to stress that Monsanto believes the charges raised against the two studies are utterly without merit, but that Monsanto's own ability to counter these charges has been impaired by the incorrect impression created in the media that your Agency has challenged the validity of these studies. This erroneous impression is perhaps best resolved via direct government involvement in performing an independent audit of the two studies followed with a publication by the government in a peer-reviewed journal of the results of that audit. If you have other alternatives besides the suggested audit to respond to this situation, please feel free to contact my office. We look forward to receiving the commitment of the government to proceed with this work.

Sincerely,


James H. Senger
Vice President
Environmental Policy Staff

DFE:ddo/13

cc: Raymond C. Loehr, Ph.D.
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