Freeman Explains Federal Law to Pesticide Use Investigators

In his statement before the Senate Subcommittee on the control of pesticides and other chemical poisons, Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman described how present federal laws protect the public. He appeared as an expert witness at hearings of the Ribicoff committee formed after President Kennedy was given the report by his Science Advisory Committee on pesticides.

"Federal law requires scientific proof that a pesticide is safe before it can be sold across state lines," Freeman explained. "It also places definite restrictions on the use of pesticides in food production... This is how it works:

A company seeking registration of a new pesticide applies to the Department of Agriculture for registration of its product. It must submit exhaustive data supporting its claim that the compound is safe and effective for specified purposes.

"This data is evaluated by Department scientists. They ask for more proof if they feel they need it.

"If evidence indicates that the proposed pesticide would leave a residue on food or feed crops, or in meat, the Department refers it to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's Food and Drug Administration, which is responsible for determining the level at which these residues are safe.

"The applicant company must then apply to FDA to set a tolerance — that is, the maximum safe amount of residue of the chemical that will be legally permitted to

Literature you'll want...

Here are the latest government, university and industrial publications of interest to contract applicators. Some can be obtained free of charge, while others are nominally priced. When ordering, include title and catalog number, if any. Sources follow booklet titles.

Controlling Insects and Diseases on Ornamental Trees, Bulletin E269, 1961, Agricultural Experiment Station, Michigan State University Bulletin Office, P.O. Box 231, East Lansing, Mich.

Weeds of the Northeast, Aids to Their Identification by Basal-Leaf Characteristics, Field Manual No. 1, University of Delaware, Agricultural Experiment Station, Newark, Del.

Torpedograss and Citrus Groves, Bulletin S-196, University of Florida Agricultural Experiment Station, Gainesville, Fla.


Chlorosis of Trees and Shrubs, Bulletin BP-2-3, 1959, Agricultural Publications Office, Agricultural Experiment Station, Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind. 5e


Control of Aquatic and Ditchbank Weeds, Bulletin X-158, University of California, Agricultural Experiment Station, Berkeley 4, Calif.

Pest Control Program for Home Orchards and Small Fruit, Folder E-17, 1961, Agricultural Experiment Station, Michigan State University Bulletin Office, P.O. Box 231, East Lansing, Mich.


Fungicides for Shade Trees, Bulletin BP-2-11, Agricultural Publications Office, Agricultural Experiment Station, Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind. 5e

Soil Testing, Bulletin 239, University of Florida Agricultural Experiment Station, Gainesville, Fla.

Some Grasses of the Northeast: A Key to Their Identification by Vegetative Characteristics, Field Manual No. 2, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Delaware, Newark, Del.

Oak Wilt, Bulletin BP-2-6, Agricultural Publications Office, Agricultural Experiment Station, Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind. 5e
remain in or on food products in interstate commerce. Normally, an FDA tolerance is set at 1/100th of the amount found safe in the most susceptible test animals.

"If the manufacturer proves that his product meets the tolerance requirements, and if he convinces the Department of Agriculture that it is safe and serves a useful purpose — then we are ready to grant registration."

"Before registration is granted, however, the manufacturer must obtain the Department's approval of the label to be used on the product. The requirements for labeling are rigid and comprehensive. Labels must clearly state what the product is, what it is made of, what it can be used for, what its dangers are, what safety precautions must be observed in using it, and the name and address of the responsible company."

"The Department follows through by spot-checking pesticides offered for sale at wholesale and retail levels, to determine they are properly registered and that labeling requirements are in fact being met."
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WEEDS AND TURF Pest Control, July, 1963