

California Botanist Defends 2,4,5-T

As a plant physiologist, I must dispute (Arthur W.) Galston's againstness of 2,4,5-T (June WTT).

He does not seem aware of the vast good which has been derived from the use and relative safety of this compound judged by more than 20 years of use.

I doubt whether he has had

straight formulated material in his eyes (as I have inadvertently, and no chance to wash it out), nor somewhat covered by it in hundreds of field trials over the span of 20 years.

He is a laboratory physiologist, while I am both a laboratory and field physiologist. I believe there

is a real danger of being "too" much in the laboratory and not understand field problems.

For those of us interested in benefits to mankind versus hazards, we do not naively say that more research should be done before 2,4,5-T is used. Imagine saying such a thing after 20-some years of research and safe usage!

He should recognize that our present life span is far greater than it was before this age of science, and that there is no evidence that pesticides have reduced average life span.

He talks about honey used in Bionetics work without commenting on it being a non-specific material. If it comes from *Aesculus*, and some other genera, it can contain substances toxic to bees; they don't survive due to birth defects. Why does he defend the use of honey in Bionetics work when it is an unknown material? Is it safe? From what source did it come in this research? I admit these are trivial questions, but no more trivial than the questions about 2,4,5-T.

Also, 2,4,5-T is a patent-expired compound, which he surely must be aware, so that no great commercial defense is possible. It remains for us who know how valuable and safe it really is to defend it (and we are mainly public employees). It is up to us to protect the millions of people who use it (for their benefit) against the nonsense of non-relevant research.

I have used 2,4,5-T through the years, and it has not greatly affected my own life span, even if I should not survive longer (and I have been exposed to it greatly in excess that of the general public).

So let us be relevant about these things, be realistic, weigh benefits against possible hazards, and not opposed because we are angry (such as the war in Vietnam, which I, too, am against).

If we don't follow this course, our whole society will fail because we are too unrealistic to maintain a functioning civilization. — **OLIVER A. LEONARD**, botanist, University of California, Davis.



Only you can prevent forest fires.