

## To Maintain a Balance With Ecologists in Nature

*"Modern farming is a parasite on ancient plant production . . . a system that cannot endure forever as it presently exists."*

*"The paddy rice system is one of the world's most elegant ecological systems."*

*"Americans are burning things at such a rate that the U.S. depends on an importation of oxygen."*

*"What about eating grasshoppers? They're two to three times as good at protein production on a pasture field as a beef cow is."*

*"Demanding that every apple be blemish-free . . . will ultimately cause—not Eden—but hell on earth."*

### ECOLOGISTS speaking.

These statements are overly alarming because we've taken them out of context. We've done so to jar your attention to a series of articles that is available as a reprint.

If you are a pesticide applicator, we strongly suggest you shell out a dollar for the whole story. We practically guarantee you will re-evaluate your opinion of ecologists, and re-evaluate the future of your business.

When ecology moved into the living room, took its seat between motherhood and the flag, and began blasting everything previously judged "beautiful progress," Michigan Farmer magazine undertook to inform its readers about ecologists.

Staff writer Richard Lehnert interviewed three ecologists at Michigan State University, John E. Cantlon, Manfred Engelmann and William E. Cooper. He asked them to tell their story on their own terms to acquaint farmers with their ideas. Five articles are packaged as a 12-page reprint entitled "Ecologists Look at Our Environment." If you're interested, send a dollar—unit price for 1-10 copies (75¢ for 11-19, further discounts available) to Michigan Farmer, 4415 North Grand River Ave., Lansing, Mich. 48906.

You should be interested. We agree with John Cantlon, who says "Ten years from now, environmental quality will be a major restraint on what people do."

At the least, you will be affected to the extent of the methods, equipment and products used; at the most, you could be put out of business.

The sudden concern for our atmosphere brought a turn in thinking, say the ecologists.

"A major shift in psychology made its appearance," said William Cooper. "Rather than the burden of proof falling on us—to prove something was harmful—the burden of proof was shifted to industry. Now if industries want to do something, it's up to them to prove it doesn't do damage—rather than us proving it does."

There is still a more compelling reason for you

to become better acquainted with ecologists. It is human nature to be irresponsible occasionally. Some people, however, are in a position to be irresponsible on a grandiose scale. Example:

The Environmental Defense Fund has petitioned the government to establish a zero tolerance for DDT in raw agricultural commodities. If we're to accept the alleged universal presence of DDT, it means, says Dr. W. G. Eden of the University of Florida, that "such a law could reduce the production and sale of many agricultural commodities in Florida and elsewhere by as much as 50%."

This irresponsible petition from persons close to the seat of government comes in the face of not one shred of evidence that DDT residues are harmful to mankind. The petitioners, it is shuddering obvious, could not have given much, if any, thought to the full consequences of their demand.

We believe the Michigan State trio to be responsible ecologists, as evidenced by Cantlon's position on pesticides.

"We always will have, and should have, pesticides, judiciously chosen, to keep pests down," he said. "But we do not live in a sealed world, in which everything can be neat and clean. We cannot kill every weed, every insect that threatens, nor should we want to."

Cantlon's position has special significance for he is president of the Ecological Society of America, a group with some 4,000 members.

*Applicators of chemical pesticides have no comparable organization!*

It is imperative that a counter-force be mustered to check any ecological irresponsibility to assure that the "Balance of Nature" remains favorable to man.

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Early morning, recently, I flew into Chicago to find it as crisp and clear as the Colorado mountains in the wintertime. A violent storm the night before had swept away the polluted air leaving this magnificent symbol of man's progress glistening in unblemished sunlight.

It was an indelible spectacle. Mankind should demand that his air—and water—be that pure every morning.

We hope the push for a "pollution-free" environment is relentless. But we must guard against a leadership that would prescribe a route requiring us to replace a New York strip sirloin with a handful of grasshoppers.

*Gene Ingalsbe*