by MOTT FOR SMALL TRACTORS



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Editorial

Water Without Chemicals?

Water alone, is a biological desert. Without chemicals it has few beneficial uses. Life survives in water only with a very specific combination of chemicals—and only then do selected organisms tolerate, grow, reproduce and sustain life. This can be accomplished in the laboratory.

In the natural aquatic environment, the species which thrive vary according to the chemical constituents. In short, the relationship is a critical balance.

With pesticides, we have added a new dimension. We have changed the balance to benefit man, and hopefully, the aquatic environment. Because we have changed the oft-quoted "balance of nature," we are committed to a system of careful pesticide usage, biological control, and physical manipulation of the aquatic habitat. Nevertheless, unless we control aquatic weeds we (nor the wildlife of our waters) can benefit fully from our water areas.

Charles R. Walker, the well-known chief of pest control research for the Division of Fishery Research of the U.S. Department of the Interior has expounded a solid philosophy on this subject which we'd like to pass along as editorial opinion this month. Charley says, in part, "There are those who look critically at technological innovations-oppressed by fear of deterioration of the environment. They are somewhat justified by numerous examples, though many are exceptions to the general rule. . . . These repeated cries of alarm about our environmental crisis are similar to the Aesop Fable of the boy who cried wolf-and unfortunately well-meaning scientists also sound alarms, and often about matters far removed from their own special area of competence. Is it any wonder that the public becomes disillusioned with science and scientists-and then suspicious of our technological improvements? . . . Our understanding is based upon respect for different viewpoints but with critical evaluation subjected by the multidisciplinary scientific community.... We cannot afford to ignore the special responsibility of the scientific community to both consider the 'good' and the 'adverse' effects of chemicals.

"We can however, maintain the confidence of the public by hearing out opposing viewpoints.... I do wish these issues were tried in the scientific arena rather than the public battleground...."