

# Southern Weed Science Society Report

**N**EARLY 800 weed control specialists helped celebrate 25 years of weed science when the Southern Weed Science Society met in Dallas in mid January. In what might be considered a time to reflect on past accomplishments and speculate on weed science in the future, delegates representing industry, universities, state and Federal agencies and others appeared optimistic in spite of the threat of increased legislation restricting the use of certain crop protectants.

Carrying out the theme of the conference, "After 25 years of weed control—what's next," Society president, Dr. Joseph R. Orsenigo of the University of Florida set the tone of the meeting with a look at weed science in the future.

"Present day weed science is far

removed from the 'man with the hoe' image and weed science in the '70's and beyond can be expected to follow the accelerating rate of change so commonplace today," he said. "Our discipline will develop as an independent and as a dependent science with major innovations from our own research efforts and from technological advances in other disciplinary areas, particularly engineering."

Orsenigo cited the applicability of UHF electromagnetic fields and laser methods to weed science now under study. He said that "despite the popular unreasoning attack on pesticides, chemical methods offer the most promising near future tools in vegetation management, crop and crop seed protectants, detoxifiers, weed seed germination stimu-



Dr. James G. Wilson, Professor of Research Pediatrics and Anatomy, Children's Hospital Research Foundation, College of Medicine, University of Cincinnati.

lators and plant modifiers. These will be selected, developed and utilized increasingly, each with built-in safeguards for the environment."

President Orsenigo told members that weed science must help to communicate with the non-agricultural 95 percent of our population and "carry the positive message of a viable agriculture that totally serves the common good."

The keynote address of the conference was a talk by Dr. James G. Wilson, professor of Research Pediatrics and Anatomy, Children's Hospital Research Foundation and the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. Dr. Wilson drew much response from Society members in speaking on "The Teratogenic Potential of 2,4,5-T." This pesticide has received more notoriety and probably been the cause of more public concern than any other such substance except the insecticide DDT, he said. The herbicide has been accused of causing human birth defects in three areas of the world. He pointed out that the compound is teratogenic, "but so are hundreds of other commonly used drugs, plant products and environmental chemicals . . . the list of chemicals now known to be teratogenic in rats, mice or rabbits is so extensive that it is quite natural



Officers of the Southern Weed Science Society discuss the 25th anniversary. Standing (l-r) are: Turney J. Hernandez, President-Elect, E. I. Du Pont de Nemours & Co., Inc.; Dr. Joseph R. Orsenigo, President, Everglades Experiment Station; and Dr. Allen F. Wiese, Vice-President, Texas A&M University, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station.

to ask if not all chemicals might be damaging to embryonic animals under the right conditions."

Following the general session conferees divided into sectional groups to hear more than 200 papers on weed science. J. D. Bird, rights-of-way specialist for the Georgia Power Company related his findings on reclearing utility ROW. He said that his utility company currently mows rights-of-ways every three years and uses a helicopter to spray swamps, hilly or rocky terrain or any other inaccessible area. Reclearing is done at about \$6 per acre per year. But he pointed out that reclearing in this manner was merely removing three years growth from the top and not affecting the root system. "Within one week after bush hogging the resprouting has started again," he said.

Bird said that brush chopping offers possibilities for reclearing ROW. Blades on the chopper penetrate the soil and cut the root system. "By cutting the root system we disturb the brush enough to slow down the growth and thereby lengthen the reclearing cycle," he said. "The use of herbicides in inaccessible areas also aids in lengthening the cycle."

The specialist concluded his report by comparing costs of mowing and chopping. He estimated that chopping costs \$18 per acre. "This compares to \$18 per acre for cost of bush logging for a three year cycle, or \$6 per acre per year," he said. "The chopping we expect to last four years at a cost of \$4.50 per acre per year."

John E. Gallagher of Amchem Products, Inc. reported on the performance of A-820, a preemergence compound for the control of crabgrass in ornamental turfgrasses. Results of tests indicate that the chemical gives good control of crabgrass in cool-season grasses at 4 pounds per acre and at 6 pounds per acre for warm-season grasses. Turfgrass

tolerance in field trials of A-820 was excellent, said Gallagher. There was only one instance of injury to bentgrass in any of the spring-applied tests and it was slight.

Also on the program was a progress report on the use of Krovar I, a bromacil-diruon mixture. F. E. Gonzalez and Tom Evans of the Du Pont Company said that tests under southern conditions indicated a broader spectrum of weed control with this compound. Broadleaves as well as grasses and hard-to-kill perennials were controlled using lower rates of the compound than similar rates of either chemical applied as a tank mix combination.

In relating the "public relations of public spraying," Lyle McCutcheon of Dow Chemical Company said that spray crews should be familiar enough with the chemicals they are spraying to be able to tell the interested public when asked. Make use of displays, bulletin boards and other means of communicating, he said.

In the area of aquatic weed control, William M. Bailey and Randy L. Boyd of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission presented some observations on the White Amur in Arkansas. They report that the Amur has been one of the best biological control agents for aquatic vegetation of those tested. Spawning attempts were successful in tests in 1970. This provided fish for research which were stocked in isolated lakes for observation. Digestive tract studies indicated the fish was entirely herbivorous. There appeared to be no competition with other fishes, they said.

The conference closed with a number of resolutions passed. One that affects the industry as well as the general public was the resolution to request from the United States Department of Agriculture a yearbook on the cost of weeds.

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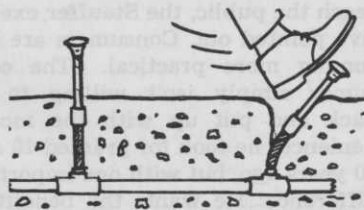
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