



Government News / Business

Senators Claiborne Pell (D., R. I.) and Daniel Inouye (D., Hawaii) have dusted off two legislative bills which propose metrication in the U.S. One Bill, from the Administration, would not make metrication mandatory; the government would provide no special incentives for easing conversion by companies and industry would set its own timetable under an independent metrication board. The Pell-Inouye Bill would set a ten-year deadline for conversion and assign the government to police the process for special tax benefits.

The Institute of Paper Chemistry of Appleton, Wisc. recently presented the U.S. Department of Agriculture with a 6-foot quaking aspen tree. The tree was one of the first to be produced in laboratory glassware, the result of 6 years of research in tissue culture. The tissue culture process is a nonsexual, vegetative method of reproduction. Starting from small pieces of cambial plugs, which develop calluses when combined with plant hormones, a completely new individual, genetically identical to the parent plant, is developed. The entire procedure -- which can produce a 3-foot tree in 6 or 8 months -- occurs in the laboratory completely isolated from wind, rain, sunshine and soil.

SAFE USE program is now into its second year. This is a cooperative program among states, industry, USDA and EPA to insure that users of parathion use the insecticide safely. USDA's Animal and Plant Health Service is coordinating the program. Compliance will enable health officials to determine areas of heavy use. Program relies on a brief form to be completed by seller and purchaser. The program is directed to ethyl parathion rather than methyl parathion.

Midwest Research Institute, in a recent study for EPA, found that 2,4-D, properly applied at concentrations to control sagebrush growth, did not persist in soil or cause toxicity to man, domestic animals, game or fish.

Arsenate herbicides will be studied on salt marsh ecosystems to determine if residues reach tidal marshes and what, if any, effects they have on marine life. The USDA has signed a 3-year, \$30,000 grant to the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station.

Expect state highway departments to become more involved in Federal highway plans. The Federal Highway Administration has announced a new approach for its research and development program. Called "Federally Coordinated Program of Research and Development in Highway Transportation," the aim is to utilize the talents and capabilities of FHWA field offices, state highway departments, universities and private research organization in the search for solutions and in the development of new techniques.