

# GOVERNMENT UPDATE

## EPA says no RPAR against chlordane

The Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Pesticide Programs has recommended there be no RPAR against chlordane, says an officer for Velsicol Chemical Corp., a manufacturer of the substance.

Charles Frommer, director of regulatory affairs for Velsicol, says, "Instead, EPA plans a comprehensive review of all compounds with termite labels. Some 30 active ingredients are involved."

Speculation over the status of chlordane spread last summer when the General Accounting Office sent a letter to EPA Administrator Douglas M. Costle, calling for a formal RPAR of the pesticide. GAO cites information from the Defense Department that showed high concentrations of chlordane in some homes where heating ducts became contaminated. They contend that there may be millions of homes in the U.S. affected in this manner.

Velsicol contends that such air plenum contamination is the result of misapplication and that no health hazard exists when proper application procedures are followed.

## OSHA Book tells full story of agency

All About OSHA, 1980 edition, contains much information about the agency and is available for no cost. To obtain a free copy, write: OSHA Publications Office, Rm. S-1212, Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20210.

## Government agencies find dioxins in 2,4-D

The Environmental Protection Agency and Agriculture Canada have found dioxins in 2,4-D samples, but have taken no regulatory action. EPA and Agricultural Canada officials said that decisions on regulatory action, if any, would be made before the next 2,4-D season, March in the U.S. and June in Canada.

EPA's response to the findings was to prepare a request to all 2,4-D manufacturers for technical samples of the pesticide used in the U.S. and descriptions of 2,4-D manufacturing processes. Some EPA officials suspect the dioxin contamination might be keyed to a particular manufacturing process. Dow Chemical, Diamond Shamrock, and PBI Gordon have already submitted samples.

Agriculture Canada emphasized that it had not found the "most acutely toxic member of the dioxin family, the 2,3,7,8-TCDD isomer" in 2,4-D samples tested.

## Social Security, minimum wage increases

On January 1, the tax base for Social Security rose to \$29,700 and the rate to 6.65%. This means an employee earning \$29,700 will pay \$1,975.05 in Social Security taxes, and the same amount will be paid by his employer. Also, the minimum wage has increased to \$3.35 an hour.

## National Arboretum begins bonsai holding

The chief of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service, R. Max Peterson, presented the National Arboretum with the first tree to be included in a new American bonsai collection.

The presentation was part of a series of national activities held last year to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Forest Service.

Ralph J. McCracken, USDA associate director of Science and Education, accepted the bonsai on behalf of the National Arboretum's managers—USDA's Science and Education Administration.

The tree, a naturally dwarfed Ponderosa pine about 150 years old, was found growing on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest in Washington.

"Freeze cycles in the Pacific Northwest, especially, have a lot to do with erosion," says Molnau. "They first break down soil clods, creating a smooth surface for the water to run over." He explains that after a rain and freeze-thaw cycle, water collects on top of the rough frozen surface rather than infiltrating the soil. Since it is warmer than the underlying soil, it slowly breaks down frozen clods and forms a thin layer of mud on the surface. Then, if there is a large amount of precipitation, the thin layer of sediment is washed off and erosion occurs.

## EQUIPMENT

### Tiller shipments up; mowers show decline

Rotary tiller shipments by domestic manufacturers rose 9.8% during the year ended August 31, 1980, while factory shipments of walk-behind and riding mowers, lawn tractors, and riding garden tractors declined for the first time in four years, according to recent estimates of the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute.

In 1980, 621,000 tillers were shipped, compared with 565,400 in the previous year. Factory value increased from \$123.3 million to \$148.4 million, or 20.4%.

Shipments of riding garden tractors declined 16.9% to 196,000 units with an F.O.B. factory value of \$312.5 million. Last year's 236,000 units were valued at \$339.3 million.

Estimated shipments of lawn tractors/riding mowers totaled 721,000 for 1980, down 9.6%. F.O.B. factory value increased 3.2% from \$458.5 million to \$473.3 million.

Walk-behind power mower shipments fell 3.5% to 5.7 million units, a decline of 200,000 units from the 5.9 million shipped in 1979, while factory value increased 7%, from \$656 million to \$701 million.

## AWARDS

### AAN governors present Green Survival Awards

The Governor's Green Survival Award, established by the American Association of Nurserymen for a superb contribution to environmental improvement through the use of living plants, was presented in recognition of two outstanding outdoor plantings in the States of Michigan and Illinois.

John Light, II, governor of the Michigan chapter of the AAN, presented one award to the City of Marshall for its

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