

UPDATE

BY WILLIAM HOFFMAN

Extension service future under review

The mission of the Extension Service, the educational arm of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is being reevaluated by several federal groups. The Secretary of Agriculture has appointed an advisory committee to make specific recommendations on how best Extension can serve in times of increasing competition for the tax dollar. At the same time, the Agriculture Committee of the House of Representatives started oversight hearings for the same reason—the first look at the entire cooperative extension system (federal, state, county) since its beginning in 1914. While initial testimony at the committee meetings and at the oversight hearings echoed strong support for the present Extension Service there was an undercurrent that, in these times of short funds and trouble among the nation's farmers and ranchers, the top priority was to return the system to the rural community and away from the urban and suburban programs began in the last decade or so. Final reports from both groups should be on hand late this year.

Aftermath of medfly spraying in California

More than \$10 million in damage claims have been filed against the state of California in the use of malathion to control the Medfly last year. Most of the claims have been for automobile paint damage but many are also claiming health effects. The state did a survey of hospital emergency rooms inside and outside the spray area and found no indications that health complaints increased during the spraying. They are interested in studies of long-term effects in the San Francisco Bay area where there were as many as 15 sprayings, but the California legislature has refused to authorize the funds.

Pesticides uses for nursery industry delayed

In the January issue, I reported that the Environmental Protection Agency, working with the American Association of Nurserymen, National Forest Products Association and the Society of American Florists, had developed a system that would give the nursery industry quicker access to many of the new pesticides. EPA proposed that certain uses of pesticides registered for use on food crops and used on non-food nursery sites would not be inconsistent with the labeling even though the sites were not on the labeling.

The Association of American Pesticide Control Officials (AAPCO), representing the state regulatory agencies, opposed this plan. AAPCO was concerned that it would result in the breakdown of the legal soundness of the label and would be very difficult to enforce. They also felt that the nursery industry had not made use of state local need (24-c) registrations to obtain the needed pesticides. In light of this vigorous opposition, EPA withdrew its backing but agreed to publish the plan in the Federal Register for all to comment on. It will be late summer this year before any decisions are made so the industry will have to use appropriately labeled pesticides this growing season.

New pesticides laboratory in New Jersey

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection announced the opening of a 25,000-sq. ft. laboratory and office facility to deal with environmental problems in the field of pesticides and toxic substances. The laboratory, located in suburban Trenton, was made possible through a three year grant from EPA. It is equipped with the latest in chemical instrumentation and will offer its analytical capabilities to federal, state and local agencies.

EQUIPMENT

Turnbull named to Toro board

Dale W. Turnbull has been made the tenth member of the Toro Company's board of directors. President of Towmotor Corporation and vice president of Caterpillar Tractor Company, he will serve in this position until Decem-



Dale W. Turnbull

ber of 1982, when he will stand for election at the annual meeting.

Turnbull joined Caterpillar as a trainee after graduating from Kansas State University in 1950. He then held a series of sales and marketing positions before becoming a president of Towmotor in 1977. Two years later, he was elected vice president of Caterpillar. Towmotor is a subsidiary of Caterpillar which manufacture Caterpillar lift trucks.

CHEMICAL

Velsicol Chemical appoints Ragsdale

Silas Ragsdale has been appointed district sales manager of the northwest region of Velsicol Chemical Corp.'s Agricultural Business Sales Group. He will cover North Dakota, South Dakota and north Minnesota from his base in Fargo, ND.

A 1975 graduate of Baylor University, Ragsdale joined Velsicol four years ago as a field representative and then worked as an industrial vegetation management specialist before this promotion.