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PESTICIDE RESIDUES FOUND IN ANIMALS THROUGHOUT WORLD

Residues of some persistent pesticides are now found in animals throughout the world, according to a Department of the Interior scientist.

Dr. E. H. Dustman, director of Interior's Patuxent Wildlife Research Center at Laurel, Maryland, said the pesticide residues found in fish and wildlife show that these chemicals have penetrated every portion of the environment.

Dr. Dustman spoke last night (February 2) at the Public Symposium on the Scientific Aspects of Pest Control being held in Washington, D. C. under auspices of the National Academy of Sciences and the National Research Council. The four-day conclave ends today.

In a discussion of a new National Pesticide Monitoring Program, Dr. Dustman said chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides have been found in nearly all vertebrate samples analyzed in recent years.

Included in the sampling were migratory waterfowl and their eggs, bald and golden eagles, many kinds of small birds, all species of big game, and fish and shellfish.

The most commonly reported pesticide residues are DDT, dieldrin, heptachlor epoxide and benzene hexachloride. Dr. Dustman said many of these will persist in the environment for years after they are applied.

He said that many people are engaged in research to learn the quantities of residues which may be hazardous, but there is concern that such quantities may accumulate before evaluation can be completed.

The monitoring program, coordinated by the Federal Committee on Pest Control, is a comprehensive effort to ascertain, on a continuing basis, the levels of pesticide residues in people, fish and wildlife, food and feed, soil and water. In the Fish and Wildlife Service, the monitoring involves samples of estuarine bottom sediments and selected forms of vertebrates and shellfish which serve as indicator species.

Those forms of wildlife that occur at, or near, the top of food chains reflect the residues found at lower levels in the food chain network. Fish to be monitored, in order of preference, are carp, buffalo, black bass, channel catfish, green sunfish, yellow perch, rainbow trout, and squawfish.

Wildlife species to be monitored will include the mallard, black duck, starling, and bald and golden eagles. Oysters, clams, and bottom sediments will be studied to determine residue levels in estuaries.

All the samples will be taken from widely spread geographic localities and at different seasons to give a representative evaluation, Dr. Dustman said.

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