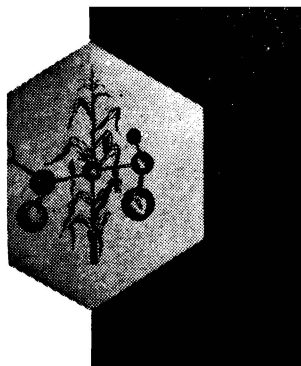


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PESTICIDES — WHAT ARE THEY?

Reprinted February 1977

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Bug killers — yes, but far more than that. The name "pesticide" may be applied to a great many chemicals, over 700 of them that help in controlling the pests which compete with us for our food and fiber and jeopardize our health and happiness. There are also biological and mechanical pesticidal methods but they will not be considered at this time because most of them are either highly specific or do not have direct application to the home and garden.

To get a clearer picture of what pesticides are, let's consider the word itself. The word "pesticide" is made up of 2 words, pest and cide. The second word, cide, comes from Latin and means "to kill". We all are familiar with words like "homicide" and "suicide", meaning to kill one's fellow man or one's self. Now if we put "pest" and "cide" together we see that we have a material or method for killing pests. There are so many kinds of pesticides however, that it is desirable to break down the broad term into more specific categories, which give an indication of how the materials are to be used.

Insecticide — a pesticide to kill insects. We usually think of insecticides as chemicals in the form of sprays, dusts, baits, aerosols or fumigants. Some insecticides are highly specific in action, while others are general purpose or broad spectrum. Toxicity to warm blooded animals, including man, varies from extremely poisonous to relatively safe. Always use the safest material for the job to be done. Some home and garden products may contain 2 or more insecticides. All ingredients are listed on the label along with directions, uses and precautions. Read the label.

Fungicide — a pesticide to kill the fungi which cause molds, rots and plant diseases. These chemicals may be formulated as sprays, dusts, granulars, fumigants or aerosols. Be sure to use the right material in the right way. Sometimes fungicides are formulated with insecticides to make a convenient home garden spray or dust. The label will tell you what is in the mixture and on which plants it can be used and on which it cannot. Remember — fungicides to control plant diseases, insecticides to control insects. Read the label.

Herbicide — a pesticide to control unwanted plants. These chemicals are sometimes known as weed killers, grass killers or brush killers — but they are still herbicides. These useful pesticides are usually applied as liquids, foam aerosols or in granular formulations. Dusts are not desirable because they may drift and injure desirable vegetation. Herbicidal fumigants are available also but their use by the home gardener is limited. Herbicidal action may be either selective

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. W. E. Skelton, Dean, Extension Division, Cooperative Extension Service, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia 24061.

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or non-selective. The selective types will kill either broad leaved plants or grasses, whereas the non-selective materials will kill both. Some herbicides should be used before weeds come up and others after weeds have emerged. Be sure that you have the right material. Read the label.

Nematocide — a pesticide to control nematodes. Nematodes are tiny eel worms that live in the soil and feed on plant roots. Very few above-ground forms are known. Most nematocides have fumigant action, although a few contact materials are available. Most nematocides are toxic to living plants as well as nematodes so must be used only as directed. Read the label.

Rodenticide — a pesticide to control rats, mice and other rodents. Most products of this class are available as poison baits. The toxic ingredient is mixed in a food-type carrier which will tempt the rodent. Great care must be taken in placing the bait in and around the home so that children and pets cannot come in contact with it. Read the label.

Pesticides are valuable tools to help us control the pests in our homes, lawns and gardens. It is essential however, that we use the right pesticide in the right way and at the right time. Read the label, follow directions and heed all precautions.

