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**LEGISLATION
AND REGULATIONS**

**Regulation of hormone-type herbicides
depends on diversity of agriculture**

THE USE OF HORMONE-TYPE HERBICIDES in the western states is complicated in some areas where there is extensive but diverse agriculture. In states with mixed agricultural crops the problem of aircraft application is particularly difficult due to the problem of drift of spray.

Washington. The application of hormone type herbicides is controlled by the Department of Agriculture. The state Director of Agriculture can define areas within which the application of herbicides is prohibited. Any area where there is a problem concerning the use of herbicides can petition the Director of Agriculture to hold hearings at which the growers and applicators can discuss their problems. Following the hearings the Director can issue regulations limiting the use of 2,4-D, or he can ban it entirely.

During 1953, 9 hearings were conducted and as a result orders were issued by the Director limiting the use of herbicides in 7 areas.

Early this year the Department of Agriculture called for hearings in Olympia to consider the question of herbicides on a statewide basis. At that time agricultural officials were considering a regulation to outlaw the use of high volatile esters of 2,4-D throughout the state.

The hearings were attended by representatives of farmers' groups throughout the state. The groups were predominantly wheat growers, in favor of 2,4-D and grape growers, opposed to 2,4-D. As a result of the hearings the state Department of Agriculture announced that the principle of local regulation would be adopted again this year.

California. Regulations for applicators of 2,4-D will be substantially the same as last year. It seems probable that there will be one further hearing sometime in April. Increased policing of aircraft applicators this year with respect to size of spray nozzles is anticipated. California requires that the aircraft spray nozzles must be at least 1/8 inch in diameter. This regulation is intended to cut down on the number of small droplets and consequent drift damage.

The drift problem is particularly critical in California for there is a great diversification of farming in the state. Intermixing of susceptible crops, such as grapes, and cotton with field crops like rice and small grains has re-

sulted in the application of the "hazardous area" principle.

The "hazardous area" principle is intended to protect crops susceptible to 2,4-D if they are predominant in an area. Here aircraft application of 2,4-D is banned entirely during the growing season of susceptible crops and strict limitations are placed on ground machines.

The cotton and grape growing regions of the San Joaquin Valley have been set aside as hazardous areas again this year. No aircraft application of 2,4-D is permitted in these areas between March 15 and Oct. 15.

The present regulations on ground spray application of herbicides may be modified this year. The use of ground machines for the application of 2,4-D within 2 miles of susceptible crops has previously been prohibited; this prohibited zone may be cut down to 1/2 mile.

In other states of the West the use of hormone type herbicides is not as great a problem because of less intensive agriculture or concentration on a single crop. Several states report that the most important use of 2,4-D is for brush control.

Arizona. The state has no regulations specifically regulating the application of 2,4-D or other herbicides. However there is a state applicators law for the regulation and licensing of commercial pest control operators.

Utah. The state board of agriculture has not restricted the use of herbicides in any way in the state.

New Mexico. There are no regulations specifically controlling the application of 2,4-D or other hormone type herbicides. Very little 2,4-D is used by the farmers in the state for crops. As far as crop damage is concerned, unofficial reports indicate that there have been two cases of damage to cotton. These cases are still pending court action.

Montana. There are no provisions in the Montana law for the regulation of 2,4-D and related compounds.

Approximately 2.5 million acres of grain were sprayed with 2,4-D in 1953. Of this acreage about 65% was sprayed with ground equipment, the remainder was sprayed by aircraft. The Aeronautical Commission does not anticipate any changes in the present laws concerning pesticide application.