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Wyoming's Leafy Spurge Program Coordinator's viewpoint: Fiction, theory or fact

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Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines the following terms as:

1. "Fiction as something invented by the imagination or feigned. Feigned being defined as not genuine or real;"
2. "Theory as the analysis of a set of facts in their relation to one another, an idea or hypothetical set of facts, an unproved assumption;"
3. "Fact is a thing done, an actual occurrence, a piece of information presented as having objective reality."

All three terms apply to the program. The program was designed on imagination based on an idea or scientific set of facts and then an actual occurrence.

The term "jargon has been applied, which is defined as unintelligible or meaningless talk or any talk or writing which one does not understand." Some examples (which are not in chronological order):

1. Aerial application has proved unsuccessful;
2. Mickey Mouse chemicals;
3. We have been criticized by other states, which is a case of one does not understand;
4. The university research work is not worth a damn;
5. If the law was implemented in the manner intended rather than being manipulated, everything would be okay;
6. The department should depend upon the integrity of the people carrying out the program;
7. You name it, we have heard about it; most which is not defined in the dictionary.

I'm not going into any more jargon or I'll place myself into the above classification.

In discussing “theory, as the analysis of a set of facts,” we had to look at our “capabilities,” which is defined in part as a “quality, ability, etc. that can be developed or used”, once we determined our capabilities, interaction had to occur which involved many organizations, such as:

1. University of Wyoming;
2. Acceptance by Wyoming Weed and Pest Council, State Board of Agriculture, Weed and Pest Control Districts and Landowners;
3. Support of private organizations and industry;
4. Last but not least, support of our Governor and State Legislature.

Many questions needed answering and several factors had to be considered before initiating the program:

1. Recognition of the problem, which included surveys, plant behavior and priority of control;
2. Did we have the knowledge required for implementing a control program?
3. Can we formulate and initiate a large scale program on Leafy Spurge?
4. Can this be accomplished without jeopardizing other noxious weed and pest programs already in effect?
5. Can the landowners, district and state afford to invest in a Leafy Spurge program?

The decision was made and H.B. 53 was introduced by State Representatives Kenneth Gropp and J. L. Graham. On March 8, 1978 Governor Herschler signed into law a six year act, that is now known as “Wyoming’s Leafy Spurge Control Act of 1978.”

The State Evaluation Committee Report is available. The report deals with “fact,” which is a piece of information presented as having objective reality. The report gives you detailed information about the program.

Beyond a doubt we are at the crossroad of the program. “Crossroad” being defined as “where a decision must be made.” Decisions that have been made or will have to be made are:

1. State legislature extended the Leafy Spurge Act to June 30, 1990;
2. Reevaluation and direction of the program;
 - a. Research. b. Education. c. Control Methods.
3. Cost evaluation, past, present and future;
4. Management systems need implementing;
5. Regenerate some enthusiasm and participation;
6. Term of maintenance program, past versus present and future;
7. Compliance section in the law will have to be tested in court;

8. Greater demand for federal participation on lands administered by federal agencies.

Interaction programs need to be intensified and accelerated to keep pace with the ongoing control programs. Various organizations will be requested for more input into the program.

Another positive aspect is the herbicide monitoring program. Based on available toxicity data and water quality criteria the herbicide concentrations do not constitute dangerous or harmful concentrations to humans or to the environment.

“Fiction, Theory or Fact,” you as individuals can draw your own conclusions.