

OPEN LETTER to the Publisher

GRANVILLE F. KNIGHT, M.D.
235 West Pueblo Street
Santa Barbara, Calif.
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all terms be care., otherwise
confusion and misinterpretation are
bound to result.

Sincerely yours,
(Signed) Granville F. Knight, M.D.

Mr. Godfrey Thomas
LET'S LIVE Magazine
Los Angeles 29, California

Dear Mr. Thomas:

I hope you will give space in your publication to this comment on an article, "Farmers Too Quick With Poison Spray," which appeared in LET'S LIVE, February, 1956.

In this article, under a subheading "Misleading Statements," the author states "Many people are misled by statements that some of the various dusts and sprays are not toxic such as rotenone." I submit that this statement in itself is misleading and needs clarification. Of course all insecticides are toxic to these creatures otherwise they would be of no service. The important question is: do they produce toxic effects in humans when used according to recommendations?

Fish are unusually susceptible to the action of rotenone: in fact, this chemical is about three times as potent as DDT in that respect. In sufficient amounts rotenone is also toxic to humans, but the lethal dose and the amounts which will produce chronic poisoning are hundreds of times higher than the same quantities of the newer chlorinated hydrocarbons necessary to produce the same effects. In addition rotenone and the pyrethrins are non-accumulative. They break down so quickly that after having been sprayed on plants in the usual concentrations, not a trace is left after a week or 10 days. When used indoors for the control of flies and other insects with normal precautions, they seem to be nontoxic for humans and animal pets. Fatalities in human beings have never been reported for either compound.

The widespread use of the newer insecticides has upset the balance of nature in many areas. Therefore it is probable that crops grown even in the best soil may be attacked by aphids and other pests at times. Under these circumstances I can see no objection to the use of pyrethrins and rotenone when used according to directions at least 10 days before harvest. For the sake of clear thinking and understanding it is important that

Please