

Maguire & Hardy (2009) timelines

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Table 1: DDT events

1874	•	DDT discovered.
1939	•	DDT insect-killing properties are discovered.
1941-1945	•	DDT used to protect US troops from insect-borne diseases in WW2.
1945	•	The production of DDT for the military, now obsolete, is employed to benefit domestic agriculture.
1947	•	Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act is passed. Requires manufacturers to test and report product safety to government.
1952	•	The question of the safety of DDT is touched on in <i>Nature</i> , authors state that no ill-effects have been reported yet (Davidson & Burnett, 1952).
1959	•	Production of DDT peaks. DDT is the top-selling insecticide. At the same time, the literature has already picked up risks and exposure to DDT.
1962	•	Rachel Carson publishes <i>Silent Spring</i> .
1963	•	<i>Nature</i> and <i>Ecology</i> review <i>Silent Spring</i> .
1963	•	The President's Science Advisory Committee (PSAC) calls for an end of the use of DDT and other pesticides.
1968	•	Wisconsin classifies DDT as a water pollutant.
1939	•	Various states implement bans of different uses of DDT.
1971	•	A court orders the EPA to hold hearings on DDT.
1972	•	The EPA bans DDT nationwide.
1972	•	DDT usage has already declined by 67% relative to 1962 levels.
1973	•	The ban comes into effect.

Table 2: DDT discourse

1959 Ecology Textbook	•	Effectively no mention of DDT.
1962 Entomology Textbook	•	Acknowledge potential adverse impacts of DDT in food.
1963 Government Report	•	Mention of massive losses of birds and fishes, and potential dangers to humans.
1966 Government Report	•	Vaguely mentions risks to birds.
1969 Government Report	•	Again vaguely mentions risks to birds and other species.
1971 Entomology Textbook	•	Acknowledges storage in fat and accumulation process—biological magnification. Textbook mostly more detailed.
1971 Ecology Textbook	•	DDT poisoning of food chains introduced.

Table 3: Regulative action

1964	•	Pesticide law reform allows for easier cancellation of registration.
1970	•	Creation of EPA—often directly attributed to <i>Silent Spring</i> .
1972	•	Ban on DDT, on grounds of substitutability—more benign pesticides.

Table 4: Industry pushback

1962	•	Industry associations and companies push back in pamphlets and reviews against <i>Silent Spring</i> .
1962	•	<i>Time</i> defending DDT on ground of National Academy of Science record.
1963	•	Company representative pushing back on national TV.
	•	(Various more).
1969	•	WHO director-general defends DDT usage for purpose of fighting epidemics—utilitarian logic.

References

Davidson, G., & Burnett, G. F. (1952). Apparent Fumigant Action of Non-volatile Insecticides in African Huts. *Nature*, *170*(4334), 893–893. <https://doi.org/10.1038/170893a0>