



BREAKTHROUGH ... Brenda Sutcliffe.

Campaigner vindicated by 50-year-old report

Damon Wilkinson / The Rochdale Observer

UNITED KINGDOM (August 16, 2008) — The discovery of a damning government report on the potential dangers of sheep dip, unearthed after 50 years, has been hailed as a major breakthrough by pesticides campaigner Brenda Sutcliffe.

Leading scientists, who were commissioned by the government to look into the toxicity of chemicals used by agricultural workers, drew links between the organophosphates and nerve agents in chemical weapons.

The 1951 Zuckerman report, which has been filed away in the Houses of Commons library, discovered exposure could lead to more than 30 symptoms, including giddiness, tinnitus, loss of memory, restlessness, depression and schizophrenia.

Scientists recommended that the labels of products containing OPs should be marked 'deadly poison' in large clear type and also stated that death could occur as a result of a single exposure.

They also made three key recommendations, that OPs cause chronic health damage, those who use them must have weekly medical examinations and doctors must be educated in the symptoms and treatment of OP exposure.

Brenda, of Sheep Bank Farm, Littleborough, has been campaigning against the use of organophosphates in sheep dip since she and her family became ill after using it more than 15 years ago.

She said: "I am absolutely furious. This is what I have been arguing about all along. "I cannot believe that any government, yet alone our government, would continue to encourage people to use these chemicals after discovering the dangers. "I am very, very angry about it and we have big plans for this information. "It says in the report that one exposure can cause death, but shepherds have been exposed to it time and time again."