



FACT SHEET

Herbicides



**Fort Detrick Public Affairs Office
810 Schreider Street
Fort Detrick, MD 21702-5000**

**Fact Number FDFS 10-05
August 24, 2010**

What is it:

Fort Detrick played a scientific and administrative role in the development of plant growth regulators and herbicides prior to 1970. These regulators were used to support Soldiers through jungle defoliation as well as supported the development of common items that were used in to support protecting the nation's food supply from insects or invasive plants.

Derivatives of some of these inhibitors are still are approved for common use in the U.S. today.

What is the background:

Plant Growth Regulators – family of herbicides

Herbicide – a natural or synthetic hormone used to reduce specific weeds or plants without harming desirable plants or crops

Preliminary information indicates that the majority of development during the 1940's, 1950's, and early 1960's was largely contained within laboratory buildings and greenhouses that remain in use at Fort Detrick.

Fort Detrick has little documentation of testing of herbicides outside of the greenhouse environment.

Why is it important to the Community:

Partners of Fort Detrick continue to study plants and the protection of plants to protect the nation's food supply by studying plant disease, crop protection, and understand optimal conditions for crops.

An historical investigation has begun to help us better understand the work and testing of herbicides at Fort Detrick during the 40's, 50's, and 60's. This historical investigation will help the Army devise a field sampling plan to help us understand whether or not residual levels of herbicides remain.

This investigation is now underway. An archival records search should be completed by the end of December 2010, with interviews being scheduled of staff, retirees, and local residents that may have firsthand knowledge of testing. Field sampling will follow if indicated.

Fort Detrick is committed to safety and environmental stewardship as evidenced outside agencies rating the Post in the top 1 percent in safety in the nation and through receipt of numerous environmental and safety awards.

If the community or members of the media desire to seek information on Fort Detrick's activities, they are encouraged to visit <http://www.detrick.army.mil/responsible>, or contact the Garrison Public Affairs Office at (301) 619-2018.