

DON'T LET IT HAPPEN: CASARON IN THE GREENHOUSE

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The worst case of "crud" we have ever seen was found on a crop of Connecticut grown Poinsettias this past season. For a time, Extension agents and specialists alike were stumped. Finally we learned that an herbicide application was made sometime before Christmas in the house where the crop was



Figure 1. Casaron damage on poinsettia. After excessive crud appeared, the bracts died.

being finished. An employee inadvertently applied Casaron (in place of Simazine or Karmex) to control weeds under the greenhouse benches.

When the crop was moved into this house and the heat came on, troubles began. The steam lines run under the benches in this house and are quite close to the floor. When Casaron is heated above 80°F it begins to volatilize.

We are now reasonably sure that Casaron vapor caused the obvious problems which are seen in these photos.

Why were the bracts the only plant part affected? Because Casaron usually affects only the actively growing plant parts. More mature foliage was not



Figure 2. A few drops of crud are still obvious as these bracts shrivel and die.

noticeably damaged; and, plants with mature bracts brought in from other houses showed little or no damage at time of sale. Casaron inhibits new cell development. Consequently, the plants normally functioning vascular system literally burst the cells in the immature bracts and cyathia.

Don't let this happen to you! Always read the label and use all pesticides with care.



Figure 3. Christmas cactus flowers formed balls instead of opening normally when exposed to Casaron fumes. They sold well as novelties!