

SALUTE



A 25-year battle by Latin American banana labourers to win compensation from companies including British-Dutch oil giant Shell for exposure to a pesticide which they claim left them sterile and crippled by ill health is set to finally come to a close after dozens of workers filed damages claims.

A series of lawsuits filed in Louisiana claims that two of the world's largest banana producers, Dole and Chiquita, allowed the powerful fumigant known as DBCP developed by Shell's American subsidiary and chemical company Dow to be used across plantations for more than two decades despite knowing, the claimants allege, that it potentially caused devastating side-effects in humans.

Lawyers representing the 160 former plantation staff from Ecuador, Panama and Costa Rica believe their clients are entitled to individual awards worth millions of pounds following the widespread use of DBCP in plantations from the 1960s until the late 1970s. The claim alleges that use of DBCP possibly continued in some places into the 1990s.

The workers, many of whom are now in their 50s and 60s, claim repeated exposure to the chemical left them sterile or with a reduced chance of having children and therefore stigmatised in their communities. They also claim a range of additional medical problems linked to DBCP including cornea damage, skin disorders and an increased risk of cancer. (...)

The article:

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/latin-american-banana-labourers-file-pesticide-exposure-claims-2303525.html>

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