Poisons in the Fields

This is a document skimming activity. For each question, skim for valuable information. Don't try to read the entire document. Use the letters on the questions and in the reading to guide you to the relevant portions of the document. Asterisks indicate the end of a section.

The document refers to economic poisons. An economic poison is defined as any toxic substance the use of which is deemed to be economically necessary (such as pesticides, herbicides, fungicides etc.)

1. Read Section A with you group. Then describe the the problem faced by field workers with regard to pesticides. Provide two specific examples of the problems associated with pesticides.

2. Skim through the case studies in C. Have each member of your group read and summarize one of the case studies.

3. From the case studies the group examined, identify one example of each of the following:

   A. The most serious example of ill effects resulting from pesticides

   B. An example of negligence on the part of the growers in terms of practices and procedures of applying pesticides

C. An example of efforts to cover up or downplay the role of pesticides in causing health hazards

4. Read F. What information did the farmworkers attempt to obtain? What rules for safety did they propose (your answer should be a summary.)

5. The Farmworkers went to court to try to get access to the information requested in F above. G. Describes the judge's decision in this case. What was the judge's decision in this case? What reasons did he provide for this decision?

6. From your group's perspective, how did the Farmworker's union improve the lives of workers with regard on the job hazards? What were the successes and what were the failures of this effort.