Cooperative Extension --- University of California, Davis

Environmental Toxicology Newsletter

"Published Occasionally at Irregular Intervals"

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Vol. 22 No. 5 -- November 2002

"IN THIS ISSUE "

DPR REPORTS PESTICIDE USE DROPPED TO RECORD LOW IN 2001

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation announced that reported pesticide use dropped by more than 30 million pounds in 2001, to the lowest level since DPR began collecting the data more than a decade ago. Preliminary DPR statistics showed that reported pesticide applications totaled 151 million pounds, compared to about 188 million pounds in 2000. DPR's preliminary data also documented declining use of chemicals classified as possible carcinogens, reproductive toxins, and toxic air contaminants. Usage dropped both in pounds applied and acres treated.

"Pesticide use in California has dropped for three consecutive years, measured in pounds," said DPR Director Paul Helliker. "We've now seen a 60-million-pound decline since 1998. There are always a variety of factors that influence pesticide use, but we also know that DPR runs the best pesticide regulatory program in the nation. We've been advocating reduced-risk, reduced-use pest management, and California pesticide users are putting that philosophy to work."

Production agriculture accounts for most reported pesticide uses, with 137 million pounds in 2001, compared to about 172 million pounds in 2000. Structural pest control accounted for 4.9 million pounds in 2001, compared to 5.2 million pounds the previous year.

Major crops that showed an overall decline in pesticide pounds applied from 2000 to 2001 included raisin and table grapes (down 7.2 million pounds), wine grapes (4.8 million pounds), sugar beets (3.2 million pounds), processing tomatoes (3 million pounds), oranges (2.3 million pounds), carrots (1.6 million pounds), and almonds (1.5 million pounds).

DPR's informal investigation found that weather, economic conditions, and health-based regulatory restrictions were all factors contributing to the decline. Disease and weed pressures were low for many crops, reducing demand for fungicides and herbicides. Lower commodity prices also contributed to less pesticide use.

For example, use of the fumigant methyl bromide dropped about four million pounds, or 39 percent, as new DPR regulations took effect. (At the same time, a federal phase-down cut supplies of methyl bromide and boosted prices.)

With strong encouragement from DPR, farmers turned to reduced-risk chemicals, as reflected by an increase in cumulative acreage treated. They also continued adopting alternatives to pesticides. DPR has provided more than $8 million for about 240 grants to support reduced-risk farm and urban projects. (Due to the State Budget deficit, DPR grants have been eliminated for fiscal 2002-03.)

Pesticide use data for 2001 is preliminary. Error checking continues, and some Kern County data have not been submitted to DPR, due to data processing problems. DPR expects total reported use will exceed 151 million pounds, but should not total more than 156 million pounds, based on a statistical analysis of Kern pesticide use for the last five years.

Some highlights from the preliminary data, comparing 2001 to the previous year:

- Most significant declining uses (in pounds) occurred in sulfur, petroleum oils, and methyl bromide. Sulfur is a natural fungicide favored by organic and conventional growers. Use dropped 16 million pounds (25 percent). Sulfur still accounts for about one-third of all pesticide use reported.
- Insecticides made of organophosphate and carbamate chemicals -- compounds of high regulatory concern -- declined by 2.4 million pounds (21 percent). Cumulative acres treated with these pesticides declined by 1.5 million acres (18 percent).
- Chemicals classified as carcinogens declined by 3.1 million pounds (13 percent) and also declined in cumulative acreage treated by 3.2 million acres (47 percent).
- Chemicals classified as reproductive toxins showed an overall decline of 6 million pounds (23 percent) and 1.3 million cumulative acres treated (33 percent).
- Chemicals categorized as toxic air contaminants, another regulatory concern, decreased by 6.1 million pounds (28 percent). Cumulative acres treated decreased by about 1.5 million acres (34 percent).
- Chemicals categorized as ground water contaminants decreased by about 553,000 pounds applied (18 percent). Cumulative acres treated decreased by about 335,000 acres (15 percent).
- Reduced-risk pesticides decreased by 40,000 pounds applied (7 percent), but cumulative acres treated increased by 134,000 acres (5 percent). However, more reduced-risk pesticides showed increased use than decreased use.

In 1990, California became the first state to require full use reporting, and DPR has compiled the reports in the most extensive database of its kind in the nation. Reported uses include production agriculture and postharvest fumigation of crops, structural pest control, landscape maintenance, and other uses. Reporting exempts home and garden applications

of pesticides, and most industrial and institutional uses. (Municipal water treatment is one such exemption.) Reported pesticide uses typically account for about one-third of all pesticide sales in California.

Summaries of 2001 preliminary data are available free online at www.cdpr.ca.gov. Final data summaries will be posted when analyses are completed. Data summaries from 1990 to 2000 are also available. Each summary includes two versions of the data (one indexed by chemical, the other by crop), with number of applications, acreage or units treated, and pounds used. A county-by-county summary is available online.

REF: CDPR Website, October 16, 2002.

ACRYLAMIDE ANGST
Another Annoying Distraction About Food Safety

by Dr. Allan S. Felsot, Environmental Toxicologist, WSU

Media headlines this past summer proclaimed a new concern about a contaminant in food. Swedish researchers at the University of Stockholm reported that acrylamide was present in a variety of baked and fried goods (Tareke et al. 2002). Although the name sounds like something scary that a big, bad global corporation might be foisting on us, acrylamide is actually an all-natural molecule that forms in food during the cooking process. High-carbohydrate foods seem to have the highest levels.

The irony of this story is that while we have spent countless hundreds of millions of dollars since the passage of the Food Quality Protection Act addressing worries about pesticide residues in food, there has been a natural compound with some pretty nasty hazards right under our noses (not to mention in our stomachs if we're eating a burger and fries while reading this). At least, that is the case if high-dose rat studies are valid indicators. Which just goes to show, we know a heck of a lot more about the highly regulated chemical products synthesized one-by-one in factories than we do about the plethora of natural chemicals produced during the chemistry of cooking.

While the Europeans, acting on the input of reports from the European Commission (ECSCF 2002), the Swedish National Foods Agency (SNFA 2002), and the World Health Organization (WHO 2002), seem to be particularly concerned about acrylamide and beg for more studies to figure out what it all means, it's probably a good idea to take a breather and skeptically examine the hazard based on studies already in hand. After all, we humans have been exposed to this stuff ever since fire instigated our love affair with cooking.

Allan covers:

Acrylamide Acquaintance
Acrylamide Awareness

Hazard Identification
How Much Is Too Much?
How Much Is In Food?
Exposure Assessment
Betting on Acrylamide Exposure
Risk Characterization: MOEs vs. Models
Is the No-Threshold Hypothesis Relevant?
Reality Checks

For the entire article, link to: Agrichemical and Environmental News, October 2002, Issue No. 198

BOTTLED WATER REGULATIONS

Bottled water is becoming more popular each year. Almost everywhere you go, people are carrying a bottle of water. According to the Beverage Marketing Corp, total U.S. bottled water sales have grown from 6 percent to more that 13 percent per year in the last five years. At that rate, bottled water may soon rank second behind soft drinks as the most popular beverage. With the growth in popularity, questions arise as to who regulates bottled water and how. What tests and inspections are performed to ensure the safety of bottled water?

Bottled water is regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Tap water is regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The FDA considers bottled water a food. Therefore, standards are defined in the Code of Federal Regulations. These standards include a standard of identity, definitions of different types of bottled water, quality standards, labeling requirements and good manufacturing practices. Regulations require bottled water to be processed, bottled, held and transported under sanitary conditions. The water source must be protected from contamination. Quality control tests must be conducted for bacterial and chemical safety.

The standard of identity says bottled water is intended for human consumption and packaged in bottles or other containers with no other added ingredients except for safe and suitable antimicrobial agents such as ozone. Fluoride also may be added. The water may be named “bottled water,” “drinking water,” “artesian water,” “artesian well water,” “groundwater,” “mineral water,” “purified water,” “sparkling bottled water” or “spring water.” Before 1995, states that produced bottled water had their own standards of identity. Since 1995, FDA preempted these various standards with uniform standards.

The quality standards set by the FDA allow specific levels of contaminants in bottled water. These allowable contaminants include: coliforms, radiological activity, and more than 70 different chemical contaminants. Other quality standards are set for turbidity, color and flavor profiles. All bottlers are required to test for these contaminants. The FDA monitors and inspects bottled water processing plants. Over the years, FDA has found that these plants have good safety records. The FDA collects and analyzes samples of bottled water just like other foods. The samples come from various sources and include foreign bottled-water products. The FDA relies on state and local government agencies to approve water sources.

Recent regulatory action has centered on arsenic levels in water. In January 2001, the EPA lowered the arsenic standard from 50 ppb to 10 ppb for tap water. This rule will be effective January 2006. Because of this, the FDA must also require this standard for bottled water or rule that such a regulation is not necessary by June 2005.

Bottled Water Consumer Questions

The FDA receives many consumer questions on bottled water. Here are a few of those questions.

What is the shelf life of bottled water?

Bottled water should have an indefinite shelf life when made under good manufacturing practices and quality standards. It should be stored in an unopened, properly sealed container. Expiration dates are not required. Longterm storage may produce off-odors and flavors.

Are plastic containers for bottled water regulated?

The plastic materials for bottles are regulated by the FDA as food contact substances. These substances must be approved under FDA's food additive regulations.

Can ingredients be added to bottled water?

The only allowable added ingredients are antimicrobial agents and fluoride to still be labeled "bottled water." If other flavors or ingredients are added, the label name must include that ingredient. An example is "bottled water with raspberry flavor." The label must also have an ingredient list.

REF: Food Safety Magazine, Aug/Sept. 2002 via Kansas State University, Food Safety News, October 2002.

DO IRON POTS ENRICH THE FOODS COOKED IN THEM?

Cooking with iron pots may help prevent iron deficiency, according to a joint study by Cornell University and Agricultural Research Service scientists. They compared the bioavailability of iron in Chinese cabbage meals cooked in pots made of iron and aluminum. The study was conducted at the Agricultural Research Service U.S. Plant, Soil and Nutrition Laboratory.

Three Chinese cabbage dishes were cooked -- fresh Chinese cabbage, fresh Chinese cabbage with vinegar, and fermented Chinese cabbage (sauerkraut) --identically in iron and aluminum pots, following a common recipe from northwest China. In each case, cabbage dishes that were cooked in iron pots had more available iron than those cooked in aluminum ones. The type of food being cooked also seemed to affect the pots' iron. Vinegar or acidic foods such as

sauerkraut appeared to leach more iron from the pots, making more iron available for absorption.

To measure the bioavailable iron, researchers used the ARS lab's revolutionary "fake gut." Coupling simulated digestion with a human intestinal cell line, it is the first system to accurately model in the laboratory what occurs in the human intestinal tract. Information about the "fake gut" appeared in the August 1999 Agricultural Research magazine, online at:

http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/AR/archive/aug99/iron0899.htm

Recipes from northwestern China from surveys showed significantly lower rates of iron deficiency in resource-poor regions, in comparison to similar regions elsewhere in the country. Plant-based diets that include lots of rice vinegar and sauerkraut cooked in iron pots are common in the region.

Iron deficiency anemia, the most serious form of iron deficiency, is among the developing world's most prevalent nutritional problems. It is associated with reduced capacity for physical labor and can lead to illness and death.

REF: ARS/USDA News, September 25, 2002.

Toxicology Tidbits

~~ What's Cooking with Vinegar Recommendations?

Acetic Acid as Herbicide

In May 2002, U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS) issued a press release describing their research on weed control using vinegar. The research was prompted by the organic farming community's need for an inexpensive and environmentally benign weed killer. Greenhouse and field studies indicated that while 5% vinegar solutions did not produce reliable weed control, solutions of 10, 15, and 20% provided 80-100% control of certain annual weeds (foxtail, lambsquarters, pigweed, and velvetleaf). Perennial weeds (Canada thistle) treated with 5% vinegar showed 100% shoot burndown but roots were not affected, therefore shoots always re-grew. Study details can be found at http://www.barc.usda.gov/anri/sasl/vinegar.html.
The press release noted the potential use of vinegar as an ideal sidewalk crack and crevice treatment. Homeowners around the Pacific Northwest had already heard about purported vinegar uses for killing blackberries in a June 6, 2001, Seattle Post Intelligencer article and had deluged Cooperative Extension offices and Master Gardeners for more information. (See also "Acetic Acid: Miracle Herbicide? Sour Product Promises Sweet Results," AENews Issue No. 185, September 2001). There is something appealing about the idea of a commonly available, inexpensive material such as household vinegar being effective against weeds. It does not harm people, in fact people consume it every day, yet it is deadly to our mortal enemies: lawn weeds. Why, such is the stuff of dreams in the pesticide issues arena!

From Dreams to Reality
We are not talking about household vinegar here. The typical strength of the stuff we toss with olive oil or run through the cleaning cycle on our coffee makers is 5% acetic acid, a concentration shown to be less-than-reliable by the ARS study. Beyond that sad fact, responsible stewardship requires that those of us in the business of making pesticide recommendations ask certain questions before embracing a pest control technology. The first of those questions should be, “What products containing this ingredient are registered for use?”

For the entire article, link to: Agrichemical and Environmental News, October 2002, Issue No. 198

~~ Dangerous Candy to be Destroyed, US FDA Says

U.S. Food and Drug Administration Deputy Commissioner Lester Crawford was cited as saying in a statement Wednesday that thousands of cases of candies that U.S. regulators say pose an unacceptable choking hazard will be destroyed under a legal agreement with a California firm. The story says that FDA said it had entered into a consent decree with New Choice Food Inc. that will lead to the agency-supervised destruction of 13,000 cases of mini-cup jelly candies, valued at about $500,000, that contain a thickening agent called konjac. Konjac candies usually are packaged as individual, mouth-sized servings. The FDA said various brands have been linked to the choking deaths of children, and the agency has moved to keep the candies out of U.S. stores.

REF: FSNET, November 6, 2002

~~ Holiday Foods and Natural Carcinogens

The American Council on Science and Health (ACSH) has published a report on the occurrence of natural carcinogens in holiday foods. This report can be access by linking to: ACSH's Holiday Menu

REF: American Council on Science and Health, October, 2002

~~ EPA releases guide to clean up mold in homes

The U.S. EPA has released a publication that provides information to homeowners and renters on how to clean up residential mold problems and how to prevent mold growth. "Molds have the potential to cause health problems and allergic reactions such as sneezing, runny nose, red eyes and skin rash," said EPA Administrator Christie Whitman." The publication "A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture, and Your Home," is available online. EPA advises those who already have a problem to act quickly. Mold damages what it grows on - the longer it grows the more damage it can cause.

Molds are part of the natural environment that help to break down dead organic matter such as fallen leaves and dead trees. Even though molds are usually not a problem indoors, they can have the potential to cause problems if spores land on a wet or damp spot and begin growing.

Molds produce tiny spores to reproduce that can grow on wood, paper, carpet and foods. When excessive moisture or water accumulates indoors, mold growth will often occur, particularly if the moisture problem remains undiscovered or unaddressed. If mold is a problem in a home, the homeowner should clean up the mold promptly and fix the water problem. It is important to dry water-damaged areas and items within 24- to 48-hours to prevent mold growth.

REF: EPA/IAQ, October 16, 2002

~~FDA Issues Import Alert on Cantaloupes from Mexico

The Food Drug Administration (FDA) today issued an import alert on cantaloupes from Mexico because of insanitary conditions that have resulted in four Salmonellosis outbreaks in the last three years in the United States. These outbreaks were responsible for many illnesses including two deaths and at least 18 hospitalizations. This import alert recommends that officials detain without physical examination cantaloupe from Mexico offered for entry at all U.S. ports.

Investigations of Salmonella outbreaks between 2000 and 2002 showed insanitary conditions in the growing and packing of cantaloupe in Mexico. In addition, FDA sampling of imported produce found some samples of cantaloupe from most growing regions in Mexico tested positive for Salmonella. The samples were collected during both the fall/winter and spring/summer season. Today's import alert expands the prior import alerts that targeted specific shippers and growers whose products were linked to outbreaks or tested positive for Salmonella.

The FDA also announced today that it will continue to work with the Mexican government on a food safety program for production, packing and shipping of fresh cantaloupes. The Mexican government has proposed a certification

program based on good agricultural practices and good manufacturing practices that would allow FDA to identify firms that have adopted and implemented such a food safety program. This certification program is still under development.

Salmonella is an organism that can cause serious and sometimes fatal infections in young children, elderly people, and others with weakened immune systems. Healthy persons infected with Salmonella often experience fever, diarrhea (which may be bloody), nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain. In rare circumstances, infection with Salmonella can result in the organism getting into the bloodstream and producing more severe illnesses such as arterial infections, endocarditis (an infection of the
lining of the heart) and arthritis.

FDA continues to recommend that consumers take the following steps with cantaloupe and other produce to reduce the risk of food borne illnesses:

- Purchase produce that is not bruised or damaged. If buying fresh cut produce, be sure it is refrigerated or surrounded by ice.
- After purchase, put produce that needs refrigeration away promptly. (Fresh whole produce such as bananas and potatoes do not need refrigeration.) Fresh produce should be refrigerated within two hours of peeling or cutting. Leftover cut produce should be discarded if left at room temperature for more than two hours.
- Wash hands often. Hands should be washed with hot soapy water before and after handling fresh produce, or raw meat, poultry, or seafood, as well as after using the bathroom, changing diapers, or handling pets.
- Wash all fresh fruits and vegetables with cool tap water immediately before eating. Don't use soap or detergents. Scrub firm produce, such as melons and cucumbers, with a clean produce brush. Cut away any bruised or damaged areas before eating.
- Wash surfaces often. Cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and counter tops should be washed with hot soapy water and sanitized after coming in contact with fresh produce, or raw meat, poultry, or seafood. Sanitize after use with a solution of 1 teaspoon of chlorine bleach in one quart of water.
- Don't cross contaminate. Use clean cutting boards and utensils when handling fresh produce. If possible, use one clean cutting board for fresh produce and a separate one for raw meat, poultry, and seafood. During food preparation, wash cutting boards, utensils or dishes that have come into contact with fresh produce, raw meat, poultry, or seafood.
- Do not consume ice that has come in contact with fresh produce or other raw products.
- Use a cooler with ice or use ice gel packs when transporting or storing perishable food outdoors, including cut fresh fruits and vegetables.

REF: FDA website, October 28, 2002

~~ Society of Toxicology Backs GM Substantial Equivalence

The Society of Toxicology says that the risks associated with GM plants "are not different in nature from those created by conventional breeding practices for plant, animal, or microbial enhancement, and are already familiar to toxicologists. It is therefore important to recognize that it is the food product itself, rather than the process through

which it is made, that should be the focus of attention in assessing safety. On this basis it backs the principle of substantial equivalence, through which GM plants are evaluated in comparison to their non-GM equivalents". The Society of Toxicology has just adopted a position paper, "The Safety of Genetically Modified Foods Produced Through Biotechnology". It says that to establish substantial equivalence, extensive comparative studies of the chemical composition, nutritional quality, and levels of potentially toxic components in both the engineered and conventional crop or animal are conducted. Notable differences between the existing and new organism would require further evaluation to determine whether the engineered form presents a higher level of risk.

The Society concludes that at present, "no verifiable evidence of adverse health effects" of biotechnology-derived (BD) foods has been reported, "although the current passive reporting system probably would not detect minor or rare adverse effects or a moderate increase in effects with a high background incidence such as diarrhea." It notes that future genetic engineering projects might cause more substantial and complex changes in a foodstuff. "Methods have not yet been developed with which whole foods (in contrast to single chemical components) can be fully evaluated for safety," says the paper. "Progress also needs to be made in developing definitive methods for the identification and characterization of proteins that are potential allergens and this is currently a major focus of research. A continuing evolution of toxicological methodologies and regulatory strategies will be necessary to ensure that the present level of safety of biotechnology-derived foods is maintained in the future."

The full paper is available at: http://www.toxicology.org/

REF: AGNET, October 11, 2002

~~ Where Should EPA Go?

If you ever wanted to tell EPA where to go, here is your chance to comment on their Strategic Plan. The EPA uses strategic plans to help them allocate resources and make program decisions. The current plan would help guide the Agency for the next five years.

Here are the questions that EPA would like for you to answer.

- What are the most important human health and environmental challenges related to pesticides, industrial chemicals and pollution prevention that EPA should address in the next 10 years?
- What specific strategies and activities should EPA strengthen or initiate to address those challenges?
- What specific accomplishments should EPA commit to achieve by FY2008 or beyond related to pesticides and industrial chemicals? Please be as quantitative and outcome-oriented as possible in your suggestions.
- What do you think are the most important changes EPA could make to become more effective and efficient in the pesticide, industrial chemicals and pollution prevention program areas?
- What other suggestions do you have regarding future challenges, accomplishments, strategies, activities, effectiveness and efficiency of other EPA programs (e.g., water, air, waste, research, enforcement, etc.)?
- What organizational challenges are you currently facing that impact your organization's ability to carry out its mission?

You can submit your comments at http://www.acsh.org/press/releases/children100802.html. The site also has EPA's current strategic plan, along with the current priorities for the Office of Prevention, Pesticides, and Toxic Substances for Safe Food, Preventing Pollution & Reducing Risk in Communities/Homes/Workplaces/Ecosystems and Reduction of Global and Cross-Border Environmental Risks. Send your comments by November 11, 2002.

AND.....

If you are interested in the history of EPA visit http://www.epa.gov/history/. This site contains interesting information such as the historical use of DDT. The site also contains fascinating facts and photos about EPA and environmental protection before the Agency was established.

REF: Georgia Pest Management Newsletter, October, 2002/Volume 25, No. 10

~~ Alcohol, smoking, and breast cancer

According to a recently published study, a woman's risk of breast cancer increases by 6% for every extra alcoholic drink (British Unit) consumed on a daily basis. The results are from the world's largest study of women's smoking and drinking behaviour. However smoking, which causes a third of all cancers, does not contribute to breast cancer, according to the study, published in the British Journal of Cancer (BJC Vol 87(11).

The new research from Cancer Research UK estimates that alcohol accounts for around four percent of breast cancers in the developed world and around 2,000 cases each year in the UK alone. And if women's alcohol consumption continues to increase this figure is likely to rise.

For more on the study see the Cancer Research UK press release.

VETERINARY NOTES.....

SURVEY SHOWS DECLINE IN ANTIBIOTIC USE IN ANIMALS

A Decrease From 1999 to 2001 Despite Increased Meat Production

New data from a survey of animal health companies show that the volume of antibiotics used in animals in the U.S. steadily declined over the past three years. In 2001, 21.8 million pounds of antibiotics were sold, dropping from 23.7 million pounds in 2000 and 24 million in 1999. The data were collected from a survey of members of the Animal Health Institute (AHI), consisting of companies that make medicines for pets and farm animals. The survey data include antibiotics used for both farm and companion animals.

The data were presented during a symposium on "Antibiotic Use in Food Animals: Impact on Resistance in Humans" at the 42nd Interscience Conference on Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy (ICAAC). It is the world's premier scientific meeting on infectious diseases and antimicrobial agents.

"Veterinarians and livestock and poultry producers are constantly evaluating their use of antibiotics as part of the judicious use of these products," said Alexander S. Mathews, AHI President and CEO. "While meat production between 1999 and 2001 rose 1.1 million pounds, use of antibiotics is not rising. Therefore, the amount of antibiotics used per pound of meat produced is going down."

"This trend can be attributed to three factors: judicious use of antibiotics and continuing improvements in production practices that reduce the need for antibiotics; continued improvements in production and preventative care practices; and the ongoing efforts of various public health and consumer advocacy groups to raise awareness of the issue," Mathews added.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved antibiotics for use in animal husbandry for four basic purposes: disease treatment, disease control, disease prevention, and health maintenance, as measured by improved growth rates or more efficient feed use. Health maintenance claims have commonly been called "growth promotion." The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) considers treatment, control and prevention of disease to be therapeutic uses. Therapeutic use of antibiotics to treat, control and prevent disease continues to comprise more than 80 percent of total use, despite claims by some that a majority of antibiotics are fed unnecessarily to healthy animals.

AHI survey respondents provide an assessment each year of the amount of veterinary antibiotics sold for therapeutic use and health maintenance purposes. The percentage of veterinary antibiotics use reported as "therapeutic" was 88 percent in 2000 and 83 percent in 2001.

While health maintenance, or growth promotion, claims are controversial, there is growing scientific evidence that use of antibiotics in animals, as approved by the FDA, helps maintain the health of animals by suppressing disease, thereby allowing animals to grow more efficiently. The European ban of antibiotics for use in growth promotion has sparked significant increases in the use of more modern antibiotics, and those in classes used in human medicine, for treatment purposes, indicating sharp rises in animal disease. Denmark, frequently cited as a model of responsible antibiotic use, has seen a 96 percent increase in the use of therapeutic drugs for animals since 1996. "While total antibiotic usage has declined by half, the striking increase in animal disease and the need for therapeutic intervention works against the interests of public health," commented Mathews.

"Good information is needed to make informed decisions," Mathews continued, "so AHI is continuing in its efforts to provide the most accurate assessment possible of the types of veterinary antibiotics being used and their specific applications. The most recent survey stands as strong evidence that the efforts of veterinarians, livestock and poultry

producers, animal health companies, regulatory authorities, and advocacy groups are advancing the principles of judicious use and preventative care to ensure that veterinary antibiotics are used responsibly."

REF: Animal Health Institute Press Release, September 30, 2002.

MATERIAL FROM CWD-POSITIVE ANIMALS SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR ANIMAL FEED

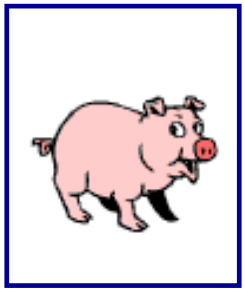
In a call to State public health and agriculture officials throughout the U.S. today, FDA announced that the Agency will not permit material from Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)-positive animals, or animals at high risk for CWD, to be used as an ingredient in feed for any animal species. Animals considered to be at high risk for CWD would include animals from CWD-positive captive herds, free ranging animals from the endemic area in Colorado and Wyoming, deer from the eradication zone in Wisconsin, and deer from any areas designated around any new foci of CWD infection that might be identified through surveillance or hunter harvest testing. FDA stated that animal feed or feed ingredients on the market that incorporate this material should be recalled or otherwise removed from the marketplace.

CWD is a neurological (brain) disease of farmed and wild deer and elk that belong in the cervid animal family. The disease has been found in farmed and wild mule deer, white-tailed deer, North American elk, and in farmed black-tailed deer. CWD belongs to a family of animal and human diseases called transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs). These include bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE or "mad cow" disease) in cattle; scrapie in sheep and goats; and classical and variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob diseases (CJD and vCJD) in humans. TSEs are very rare, but are always fatal. Although CWD shares certain features with other TSEs, it is a distinct disease. There is no known treatment for these diseases, and there is no vaccine to prevent them. In addition, there are no validated diagnostic tests for CWD or other TSEs that can be used to test for the disease in live animals or humans.

Only deer and elk are known to be susceptible to CWD by natural transmission. However, there is little scientific evidence to show whether CWD is or is not a hazard to humans or non-cervid animals such as cattle and pigs. Therefore, FDA believes it is prudent that CWD-positive deer and elk not be used in animal feed. During the call to State health and agriculture officials, FDA announced that the Agency plans to issue a Compliance Policy Guide on this issue at a later date. Additional information on this guidance document is contained in the November 8, 2002 Federal Register and from Dr. Marilyn N. Martinez, Center for Veterinary Medicine (HFV-130), Food and Drug Administration, 7500 Standish Place, Rockville, MD 20855, 301-827-7577.

REF: US Food and Drug Administration Center for Veterinary Medicine Update November 12, 2002.

!! Click on the Pig !!



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