

Those "New Foods" can KILL You

by Jack Denton Scott

AMERICA is the greatest food-producing country the world has ever known. We grow the fattest beef, biggest vegetables, juiciest fruit. But — along with the finest food in the world, we're serving liberal portions of disease. We're putting poison on our plates every day.

With our thick steaks and chops and tender green vegetables come unseen and unasked-for drugs, chemicals and sprays, many of them improperly tested and many of them extremely harmful — even death-dealing.

Early this year, at a symposium on medicated cattle feeds conducted by the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and the Food and Drug Administration, four doctors got on their feet and warned the world against feeding meat animals diethylstilbestrol — a female sex hormone.

One by one, these medical men said in substance: "This hormone has been known to induce cancer. We do not know what the cumulative effect will be on the human populace which consumes meats fed this hormone."

Dr. Rigoberto Iglesias of Chile testified that in experiments conducted for over two decades, he had proved that the continuing administration of minute doses of the hormone is more effective in inciting

cancer than intermittent injections of larger doses. The other doctors said that their tests proved that injections of the female sex hormone in mice, rats and guinea pigs had induced polyps, fibroids and tumors.

How does all this affect you? Well, the doctors at the symposium pointed out that more than 30,000,000 chickens and half the beef cattle of this country are, at this moment, being fed diethylstilbestrol. Since the hormone stimulates growth and brings about a rapid increase in weight, the men who put meat on your table are using it in increasing quantities. It may be financially logical for them, but it is illogical and dangerous for you.

The alarmed doctors at the symposium didn't bluntly say that the sex hormone fed to beef cattle and fowl was definitely giving us cancer. But the conclusion was: "The introduction of hormones (estrogens) into the food supply presents the problem of exposure of human beings from birth onward." But as you read this, nothing has yet been done about this doubtful and dangerous practice.

And how did you enjoy your DDT today? Dichloro diphenyl trichloro ethane is a chemical spray that most of us are familiar with. We use over 100 million pounds a year on everything from boudoirs to

barns. Although DDT is poison to man as well as to insects, there are few meals we sit down to that aren't sprinkled with it.

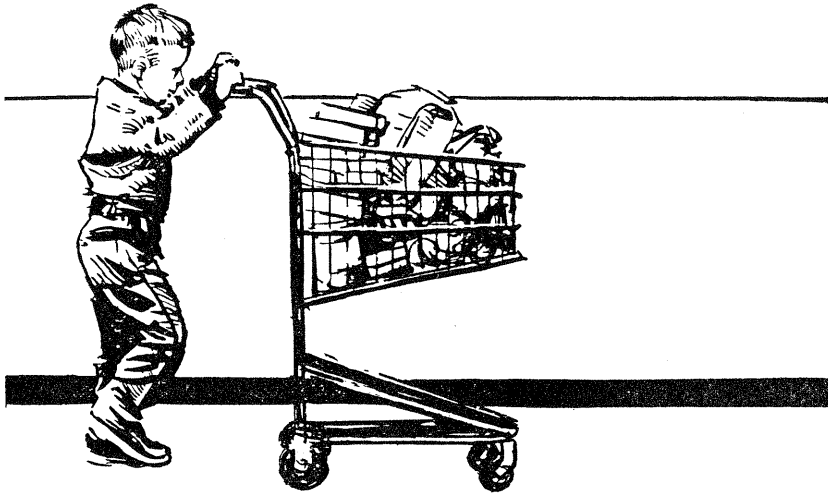
There is no doubt that this insecticide, which is as common as salt and as taken for granted as toothpaste, is almost pure poison. It is a fat soluble neurotoxin that attacks the central nervous system, then the spine and brain. The American Medical Association has it listed as causing hyper-excitability, generalized tremors, spastic or flaccid paralysis and convulsions.

INTERESTED in discovering what DDT was all about, investigators at the Utah State Agricultural College sprayed it on alfalfa, gave the alfalfa to cows, took the milk from the cows and churned the cream into butter. The butter was then fed to rats, and they were killed and examined. Large amounts of DDT were found in the rodents' fatty tissues, the toxic qualities undisturbed.

It is in the fatty tissues of all animals, including humans, that DDT hides and does its dirty work. What may lie in store for a generation of people who have been exposed to DDT in its many forms is a question that is alarming many medical scientists. Dr. Francis Pottenger, Jr., secretary of the Los Angeles County Medical Commission for

the Study of Environmental Contaminants, has been making a study in his community.

"If, after four or five years," he says, "people who can't believe that they have DDT in their bodies are discovered to have from zero up to thirty-three parts per million in their fat, what is going to happen after we have been using DDT from ten to fifteen years?"



Recently, at a national meeting of the American Public Health Association, it was divulged that not one meal that the health investigators had examined in a cross-section test was found free from DDT. They also pointed out that the three meals a day consumed by most Americans contained 184 micrograms of it. Although the investigators quickly added that this was below the dosage which human guinea pigs had taken without harm, the question asked by doctors present about the over-all, cumulative effect went unanswered.

Actually, that question has gone unanswered for too many years. Today we have so many pesticides that there isn't a complete list of them available — some of them the chemists don't even know how to test for. In addition, over 700 chemical food additives are being sprinkled on our food, less than half of them having been effectively tested for human use.

Back in 1937, a company placed a new liquid sulfanilamide on the market. They called it "elixir" and it contained diethylene glycol, a solvent used mostly as an automobile anti-freeze. There was only one trouble with it. It was a killer. At least 100 people died that year after taking the elixir. The next year the

Food and Drug Administration changed the law, stipulating that manufacturers test all new drugs and get government approval before marketing.

IN 1943, a compound, monochloroacetic, was tested by the Food and Drug Administration when it was offered by a manufacturer as a food preservative. It was found that it

killed laboratory animals and would undoubtedly be poisonous to humans. It was ordered discontinued. But regardless of the FDA decision, one company added it to a synthetic orange drink and hundreds of cases of severe and dangerous digestive upsets were caused before it was discovered and taken off the market.

This closing-the-barn-door-after-the-horse-has-gone technique, the removing of harmful chemicals and drugs from the market after they have done their worst, isn't the major problem. Keeping them from ever getting on the market and into the human system should be the first concern of governmental agencies.

To this end, the House Select Committee to Investigate the Use of Chemicals in Food and Cosmetics held two years of hearings and took four thick volumes of testimony. Concentrating on insect sprays, they discovered that about two billion pounds of insecticide were manufactured every year — that over 30,000 registered formulas, containing at least 100 pesticidal chemicals are being used.

They also found all of these were poisons in one form or another, and that small quantities were getting into our food, no matter what pains the agriculturists and food-proces-

sors were taking to prevent it.

The committee discovered an alarming fact: Up until the time they met, *anybody* could put an insecticide on the market without having to demonstrate its harmlessness! The *government* had to prove that any particular pesticide was harmful, and a long and dangerous passage of time and prolonged court sessions were needed to get a doubtful insecticide off the market.

They also determined that some of the insecticides were necessary and doing much good in helping wipe out insects that plague the farmer, and they found that many large meat- and food-processing companies were spending vast sums to protect their customers from insecticides.

But even though Congress passed a law in 1954 as a result of the investigation, making it mandatory for the manufacturer to show conclusive proof that the residue of his insecticide left on crops can safely accumulate in the human body over a lifetime, medical men and scientists still fear that the so-called cumulative build-up of small amounts of these poisons are causing and will continue to cause disease and death.

Dr. Arnold J. Lehman, director of the division of pharmacology of the Food and Drug Administration, puts the poison puzzle in words. "The real trouble is," he says, "that our insects are getting more and more immune to the different poisons we put on the market, so we have to continue making the poisons stronger" — poisons like chlordane, toxaphene, aldrin, dieldrin and heptachlor, the residues of which are so difficult to remove that you cannot wash them off food even with boiling water. And there are even more dangerous ones, like benzene hexachloride, which has such amazing staying power in soils that it is 50 percent effective three years after it has been used.

Early experts pronounced it "harmless to humans, sure death to all insects." It was used everywhere and did its job well. Then governmental researchers found benzene hexachloride in the brain cells of all of their test animals and discovered that it was also causing cancer-like growths. It was immediately ordered off the market. But no one knows what harm it has already done. And even today it is being used in the production of cot-

ton, probably on the assumption that cotton isn't eaten. But the rotation crop on most cotton fields is peanuts, and they come to us as food in many ways.

THE PRACTICE of adding countless varieties of chemicals directly to our food is now so common that most of us take it for granted. But as this is written, we as yet do not have legal barriers against careless and promiscuous use of these chemical additives.

Dr. Clive McCay, professor of Nutrition at Cornell University, sounds a grave warning:

"The entire subject of chemicals added to our food is far more important to the health of our nation today than any of us dream. The basic philosophy of nutrition specialists is first, that no chemical should ever be added to a given foodstuff unless it has long been tested on many species of animals. Long testing means a period of ten years or more. Not only should compounds be well tested before

use, but nutrition never sanctions the use of even a compound in a foodstuff if a given product can be made just as well without it. . . ."

Probably a great deal of the blame for contaminating our food can be laid at the feet of the consumer — you. We're conditioned to the easy way of life, to the instant mixes and drinks, to the quick work-saving way of doing things. Food processors and manufacturers are helping push us along by using chemicals instead of nature. Before long, we'll be working on things like "instant chickens" — birds so stuffed with miracle chemicals at birth that they will be ready for market almost overnight. We're becoming too clever with chemicals. We're neglecting nature and pushing ourselves into a perilous synthetic world.

WHAT CAN we do about it? Public awareness isn't enough. We need sharper protective teeth in our Food and Drug Acts; we need more Congressional study and action such as that law passed in 1954,

placing the burden of proof directly on the manufacturers of insecticide poisons. And we need this action promptly.

Taken from today's newspaper headlines is the story of a shocking request from produce people: they are asking permission to dip vegetables in aureomycin because this drug will keep the produce green and on the market for ten days longer. And, even more shocking, certain dairy companies are clamoring for official clearance of their proposal to drop liquid aureomycin in milk. "It will keep milk fresh at least two weeks longer," they assert.

But no one can presently say what this doctored milk will do to the millions of children who drink it three times a day. And what will be the end result of the daily intake of aureomycin in our green stuffs and dairy products? In short, how much pesticide poisons, improperly tested antibiotics and mysterious chemicals can the human system endure?

At this point, few people seem to care.



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Milwaukee 1, Wisconsin