

This test consists of injecting an extract of dead tubercle bacilli under the skin of the cow. Fever, swelling, and inflammation at the point of injection constitute a positive test. Cattle with a positive test are condemned and killed.

The slaughter of thousands of cattle each year under the Nebraska law and similar laws in other states seems to be the basis of the farmers' rebellion. Their complaints that many of the cows which are slaughtered following a positive reaction to the test are found to be without traces of tuberculosis are in line with a series of investigations by Prof. E. G. Hastings and Dr. B. A. Beach, professors of bacteriology and veterinary science at the University of Wisconsin. They reported to the Society of American Bacteriologists at their December, 1924, meeting that in twenty Wisconsin counties in three years, 387,180 cattle were tested, and 5,888 of these gave a positive reaction. Yet, on post mortem examination no evidence of tuberculosis could be found in 1279 of the positive cases. In some of these latter they found a germ very similar to the one which causes tuberculosis, except that it was apparently harmless. Prof. Hastings and Dr. Beach believe that this germ causes cattle to react positively, and is the reason for many of them being needlessly slaughtered.

TUBERCULIN TEST DEFENDED BY GOVERNMENT EXPERT

"Without the aid of tuberculin it would be absolutely impossible to attempt to control tuberculosis in livestock," said Dr. J.A. Kiernan, chief of the tuberculosis eradication division of the U.S. Bureau of Animal Industry, when he was asked whether the accuracy of this method of testing is in doubt. "Before use of tuberculin became general," Dr. Kiernan stated, "physical examination of cattle was depended upon, but it proved futile in freeing herds of the disease.

"The same percentage of accuracy is shown by tests now as was found more than 30 years ago when tuberculin was first used for the purpose of diagnosing tuberculosis in cattle," he continued. "Of more than 20,000 animals that reacted to the tuberculin test during June, 1925, 92 per cent. showed positive lesions of tuberculosis on the ordinary post mortem examination. Many more of those animals would have shown lesions had a more thorough search been made. Furthermore, laboratory examinations of the tissues of the animals that showed no lesions would reveal at least one-fifth of them to be tuberculous. In some of the states where thousands of reacting animals are slaughtered, cases showing no lesions are less than three per cent., thus indicating a very high degree of accuracy for the test.

Dr. Kiernan pointed out that the campaign for eradication of tuberculosis in livestock is going on in every state, and that it is purely voluntary work, carried on under state laws and regulations. No owner is required to submit his herd to the test except in areas where at least 75 per cent. of the other cattle owners have their herds tested.

During the fiscal year 1925, 7,000,000 cattle were tuberculin tested in the United States.

Egypt has bought 131,436 pounds of shoe polish from the United States this year.
