PHARMACY

Antibiotics Number 141

Seven basic mold remedies are now commercially available. Production of penicillin in January, 1950, had reached 16 trillion units per month.

➤ THE NUMBER of antibiotic, or so-called mold remedies, now totals 141 and runs from A almost to Z. A list of them, starting with actidione and ending with Xg, has been prepared by Dr. A. L. Baron of the research division of S. B. Penick Co., one of the group of firms that started penicillin production during the early days of World War II.

At that time, in 1942, there was not enough penicillin to treat a single patient. By January, 1950, production had reached the "enormous figure of 16 trillion units per month," states Dr. Henry Welch, chief of the antibiotics division of the U. S. Food and Drug Administration.

Of the 141 antibiotics listed by Dr. Baron, there are seven so-called basic ones that are commercially available. These are penicillin, streptomycin, chloramphenicol (also known as chloromycetin), aureomycin, bacitracin, tyrothricin, and terramycin. Besides the list of these basic seven, Walter J. Derenberg, Trade-Mark Counsel of the U. S. Patent Office, also gives a list of 80 antibiotic trademarks registered or about to be registered as of May, 1950.

Penicillin and other antibiotics are certified by the U. S. Food and Drug Administration. This means, Dr. Welch explains, that the FDA examines each batch of the drug produced for identity, strength, quality and purity before it is shipped in interstate commerce.

The 80 trade-marks listed by Mr. Derenberg cover either a single antibiotic produced by a manufacturer, as Ledercillin which is the Lederle Laboratories name for its penicillin for human use, or a preparation containing two drugs such as penicillin and ephedrine.

The information on trade-marks and certification are given in Dr. Baron's HANDBOOK OF ANTIBIOTICS (Reinhold). (Listed, SNL, Dec. 9.)

Science News Letter, December 16, 1950

ASTRONOMY

Big American Planetarium

Made from war surplus lenses, two-ton projector under construction in California will be quite similar to famous Zeiss instruments.

➤ A LARGE machine for projecting synthetic stars and planets is at last being made in the United States.

Out of war surplus lenses and a war-time optical shop sometime next year will come America's first two-ton planetarium projector.

The projector will be dumb-bell shaped and quite similar in design to the famous Zeiss projectors, made in Germany before the war and in use at a half-dozen or so planetaria throughout the country. Being built under the direction of Dr. G. Dallas Hanna, the new instrument will be housed in the Morrison Planetarium, in a wing of a building now being completed at the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco.

Only stars and planets visible to the unaided eye will be shown by the projector. The new machine, a compound projector, is made up of 32 smaller projectors that image the stars on the planetarium dome. Two other sets of projectors are used for showing the movements of the planets, moon, sun and the earth.

Star plates for the projectors, which can be likened to slides used in home projectors, will be made of glass covered with a thin coating of aluminum. Holes in the aluminum represent stars.

A few years ago, planetaria existed only in a half-dozen communities. Today the stars are regularly "put through their paces" several times each week at no less than 13 planetaria. Zeiss and Spitz projectors are used chiefly, while the Korkosz projector, an elaborate home-made device that projects the stars but not the planets, has been performing successfully for over a dozen years at the Seymour Planetarium in Springfield, Mass.

The Zeiss projector is by far the most effective device yet produced for picturing the motions of the heavens. With this instrument the clock of the heavens can be turned back a thousand years or more.

But the Zeiss works, a war-casualty, are no longer in existence. So today Americans are making simple and complicated planetarium projectors with great success. One is being made in California, another has reached the blue-print stage of development.

An inexpensive portable machine of great popularity today is the Spitz planetarium, used to bring stars into the classroom and even into the home. Attachments are available to show comets and meteors, eclipses of the sun and moon. Developed by Dr. Armand N. Spitz, lecturer at Fels Planetarium and educational director of the Franklin Institute, Philadelphia, this projector weighs only about 25 pounds and costs but a fraction of the price of a pre-war Zeiss.

Science News Letter, December 16, 1950

DAIRY SCIENCE

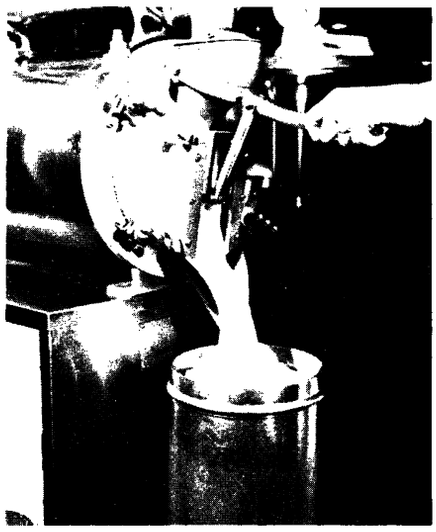
Buttermilk Used for Tastier Ice Cream

➤ MAYBE the pigs will not like this, but you will. Sweet cream buttermilk, dairy industry by-product that has gone to feed livestock in the past, can now be made into ice cream.

Buttermilk ice cream tastes like chocolate, vanilla, strawberry or any other flavored ice cream. It does not taste like buttermilk. Experts say it is creamier and more flavorful than ice cream made with skim milk.

Use of this material for ice cream is possible because of research by dairy scientists at the U. S. Department of Agriculture. They foud a way to make sweetened condensed buttermilk which keeps. Heretofore there have not been satisfactory methods for preserving sweet cream buttermilk so that it could be stored and shipped.

Science News Letter, December 16, 1950



SMOOTH—This creamy ice cream is made from sweet cream buttermilk that formerly went to feed the pigs. It is made possible by a new method for preserving buttermilk so that it can be stored and shipped.