

# SCIENCE NEWS®

The Weekly Newsmagazine of Science

A Science Service Publication  
Volume 134, No. 8, August 20, 1988

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Subscription Department  
231 West Center Street, Marion, Ohio 43305

Subscription rate: 1 yr., \$34.50; 2 yrs., \$58.00.  
(Foreign postage \$6.00 additional per year.) Change of  
address: Four to six weeks' notice is required. Please  
state exactly how magazine is to be addressed.  
Include zip code. For new subscriptions only call  
(1) 800-247-2160. Printed in U.S.A. Second class  
postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional  
mailing offices. Title registered as trademark U.S. and  
Canadian Patent Offices. Published every Saturday by  
SCIENCE SERVICE, Inc., 1719 N St., N.W.,  
Washington, D.C. 20036. (202-785-2255)  
ISSN 0036-8423

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Cover: The verdant rice fields of Indonesia and other countries are threatened by overuse of pesticides. An integrated pest management program, designed to let beneficial insects control rice-eating pests, seems to offer a solution with many peripheral benefits. (Photo: FAO)



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## Letters

### Potato ponderings

In "Through the Eyes of a Potato" (SN: 7/2/88, p.12) Diane D. Edwards says the name spud may have come from the spade used to dig the tubers. You may be interested in an excerpt from Helen Hamlin's book *Pine, Potatoes and People* (Norton, 1948):

"Potatoes met a severe setback in England, where the wheat growers who feared the new, competitive diet staple organized the Society for the Prevention of Unwholesome Diet. It launched such a successful campaign that the initials for this society, S.P.U.D., are still

used as a nickname for the potato."

*Jim Minard  
Everett, Wash.*

**My wife tells** me it now takes 50 percent longer than it used to to bring a baked potato to an acceptable state of softness for edibility. She rejects the suggestion that her oven may be responsible, pointing out that other things she roasts or bakes take the same amount of time as before.

Perhaps in addition to the question of how a potato tastes, potato scientist Raymon Webb might consider how much energy must be expended to bake it.

*Arthur J. Morgan  
New York, N. Y.*

### Hardhearted?

The idea that the American Heart Association has determined its name and reputation can be sold to food companies that can afford them ("Eat right and avoid loneliness," SN: 7/2/88, p.4) should stop hearts all over America — especially those of small independent food processors.

Maybe someday soon we can buy a can of beans for \$6 or \$8 approved by AHA (American Heart Association), ACS (American Cancer Society), PC (Poison Control), ADF (American Diabetes Foundation), AKF (American Kidney Foundation) and ETC (et-cetera).

*Stephen C. Brown  
Inverness, Fla.*

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