

SCIENCE NEWS®

The Weekly Newsmagazine of Science

Science Service Publication
Volume 149, No. 25, June 22, 1996

Donald R. Harless	Publisher
Julie Ann Miller	Editor
Blair Burns Potter	Managing Editor
Dan Skripkar	Production/Design Director
David Lindley	Associate Editor
Janet Raloff	Senior Editor
Ron Cowen	Environment/Policy
Bruce Bower	Astronomy
Richard Lipkin	Behavioral Sciences
Richard Monastersky	Chemistry/ Materials Science
John Travis	Earth Science
Kathleen Fackelmann,	Biology
Steve Sternberg	Biomedicine
Tina Adler	Life Sciences
Ivars Peterson	Mathematics/Physics
Erik Skindrud	Science Writer Intern
Damaris Christensen	Editorial Assistant
Cait Anthony	Books/Advertising

SCIENCE NEWS (ISSN 0036-8423) is published weekly on Saturday, except the last week in December, for \$49.50 for 1 year or \$88.00 for 2 years (foreign postage \$6.00 additional per year) by Science Service, Inc., 1719 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Second-class postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional mailing office. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to SCIENCE NEWS, P.O. Box 1925, Marion, Ohio 43305. Change of address: Four to six weeks' notice is required — old and new addresses, including zip codes, must be provided. Copyright © 1996 by Science Service, Inc. Title registered as trademark U.S. and Canadian Patent Offices. Printed in U.S.A. on recycled paper. ♻️ Reproduction of any portion of SCIENCE NEWS without written permission of the publisher is prohibited.

Editorial and Business Offices:
1719 N St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036
202-785-2255; scinews@scisvc.org

Advertising Representative:
Lewis Edge & Associates, Inc.
366 Wall St., Princeton, N.J. 08540
609-683-7900

Subscription Department:
P.O. Box 1925, Marion, Ohio 43305
For new subscriptions only, call 1-800-247-2160.
For customer service, call 1-800-347-6969.

Letters

Overlooking vegetable proteins

If there is an "error of omission," it lies more in Al Fried's letter (SN: 3/30/96, p. 195) than in the SCIENCE NEWS report on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's new dietary guidelines. The USDA fully endorses the healthfulness of a vegetarian diet at the same time that it recommends two to three servings a day of high-protein foods.

There is no discrepancy here. Fried fails to recognize that proteins are present in vegetable foods, particularly legumes and grains, as well as flesh and dairy products.

By eliminating cholesterol and animal fat, a vegetarian diet is far more likely to promote health than to "jeopardize" it.

Bina Robinson
Swain, N.Y.

Desperate measures

We are deeply concerned after reading your article on releasing lethal rabbit viruses in Australia ("Hippity Hop Goes the Virus,"

This Week

- 388 Radar Catches a Tornado in the Act
- 388 Reproductive equality: A male Pill?
- 389 Observatory spies some familiar compounds
- 389 How temperature, plant defenses alter bugs
- 390 Multiple doors for HIV to enter cells
- 390 Dioxins: New attempts to smoke them out
- 391 HIV accelerates in 'closeted' homosexuals
- 391 Test-tube stickers for DNA-based computers

Research Notes

- 395 Animal Science
- 395 Astronomy
- 399 Biology
- 399 Paleontology

Articles

- 392 Neural Code Breakers
- 396 The Human Numbers Crunch

Cover: This floating market in Bangkok illustrates a low-energy alternative to the West's supermarkets and shopping malls. How many people Earth can sustain will depend on the near-term choices we make about lifestyle, patterns of consumption, and economics, as well as measures to foster local ingenuity. (Photo: ENVISION © J.B. Marshall)



Departments

- 386 Books
- 387 Letters

Science Service, which publishes SCIENCE NEWS, is a nonprofit corporation founded in 1921 to increase the public understanding of science. Through its youth programs, it administers the International Science and Engineering Fair and the Science Talent Search for the Westinghouse science scholarships.

Board of Trustees — *Chairman*, Dudley Herschbach; *Vice Chairman*, Gerald F. Tape; *Secretary*, David A. Goslin; *Treasurer*, Willis Harlow Shapley; *Joseph W. Berg Jr.*; *Robert W. Fri*; *J. David Hann*; *Shirley M. Malcom*; *C. Bradley Moore*; *Ben Patrusky*; *H. Guyford Stever*; *Sanford J. Ungar*; *Deborah P. Wolfe*.

Honorary Trustees — *Chairman Emeritus*, Glenn T. Seaborg; *Edward Bliss Jr.*; *Bowen C. Dees*; *Elena O. Nightingale*; *O.W. Riegel*; *John Troan*.

SN: 3/30/96, p. 206). This virus will not only affect Australia, but it will affect the world. Being rabbit breeders, we see this action as an alarming threat. If the virus gets loose in the United States, it will destroy thousands of top-quality show rabbits and will cost breeders millions of dollars.

Just because Australia has a problem it created for itself does not mean it should endanger the world's rabbit population.

Nyki Perry
Elizabeth Smith
Karen Emmons
Carolyn Cross
Debbie Honeycutt
Allison Johnson
Deborah Cross
Deltona, Fla.

Send communications to:
Editor, SCIENCE NEWS
1719 N Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
or: scinews@scisvc.org
All letters subject to editing.

I'll move over there and take care of the problem for free. Just pay my way. Bullets are cheap. I'm a good shot. Give me a call.

Josh Foster
Deland, Fla.

It seems like sterilizing the rabbits would be a much better and safer action to take than using a virus.

Theresa J. Cross
Deltona, Fla.

Australians do shoot rabbits, and they are studying sterilization as a means of control.

—T. Adler

All that glistens...

Michael Dunn is incorrect in saying that gold coins cannot be counterfeited (Letters, SN: 4/13/96, p. 227). Looks like he's never heard of alloys. The average consumer does not have the means to test whether a coin is an alloy or pure gold.

Aditya Mishra
Sunrise, Fla.

JUNE 22, 1996

SCIENCE NEWS, VOL. 149

387