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AGRICULTURE

Uniform Cattle Eartags Eliminate Confusion

CATTLEMEN IN ALL 50 states have now adopted a uniform system that will identify 8,000,000,000 cattle by individual numbers stamped on metal eartags permanently inserted in the animal's right ear. First proposed by the U. S. Department of Agriculture in 1955, the uniform eartag number plan eliminates confusion caused by different marking systems. Owners and Government workers will use the numbering system in conjunction with individual records showing health status, inoculation dates, etc., production and breeding activity of each animal.

Science News Letter, March 26, 1960

NUTRITION

Electronic Ovens Found Second Best

NOTE TO HUSBANDS whose wives are pestering them for a new, electronic stove: It came in second best in cooking contests with conventional ovens.

Studies by Miss Nancy Marshall at the Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station, Wooster, Ohio, show that electronically roasted beef is lower in appearance, tenderness, juiciness and flavor than comparable cuts cooked in conventional ovens.

Roasts cooked electronically looked dry and were full of holes. Portions of the roasts became so hard they were unpalatable. Only 40% of the original weight was "acceptable meat" after electronic cooking. By comparison, standard ovens turned out 65% acceptable meat.

However, electronic ovens won in speed. They cooked four times faster, averaging 10.7 minutes per pound of meat, while the older method took 45.4 minutes.

Miss Marshall, reporting in the *Journal of Home Economics*, 52:31, 1960, says that weight loss, dryness and toughness could be cut down by covering the roast with fat. Using aluminum foil as a wrapper in electronic ovens was not advisable because it allowed electric arcing, causing sparks in the oven, she said.

Science News Letter, March 26, 1960

AGRICULTURE

Test for Antibiotics In Milk Developed

A TEST FOR antibiotics in milk that could be conducted on the farm is now in the experimental stage.

F. V. Kosikowski of Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y., told a University of Wisconsin Farm and Home Week dairy industry session at Madison that the test would enable dairy fieldmen to test farm milk at regular intervals, without the necessity of bringing samples to the dairy plant. He said present research was aimed at producing a kit fieldmen could use.

In the test, tiny, blotterlike disks are used to soak up small samples of milk. These are then placed on a plate where bacteria organisms are growing in a favorable substance. If, after an incubation

period, there is no bacteria growth in a halo-like area around the disks, it is assumed that an antibiotic or cleaning compound is present in the milk.

Mr. Kasikowski said a disk containing penicillin is also used in the plate to show whether its "area of inhibition" is similar to the milk.

Residues of penicillin and other drugs in milk can cause difficulty in cheese making, killing favorable bacteria while permitting dangerous germs to grow.

Science News Letter, March 26, 1960

BOTANY

Direction of Rotation Affects Plant Growth

THE HEALTH of your potted plants may depend on the direction in which you rotate them.

A New Zealand researcher took several types of plants under fixed conditions of light, temperature and humidity and turned them continuously about a vertical axis at the rate of one revolution a day.

He found that the plants used—cyclamen (a member of the primrose family), scarlet runner beans, and oats—were sensitive to the direction of rotation. Clockwise rotation inhibited growth while counter-clockwise rotation stimulated it.

These findings are reported in *Nature*, 185:775, 1960, by Dr. R. L. Jones of the department of scientific and industrial research, Dominion Physical Laboratory, Lower Hutt, New Zealand, in hopes that they may be useful background to a study of the twining of plants.

Science News Letter, March 26, 1960

GENERAL SCIENCE

Co-Creator of Atom Bomb Wins Einstein Medal

DR. LEO SZILARD, one of the co-creators of America's first atomic bomb, has won the Albert Einstein gold medal and \$5,000 award for 1960. Born in Hungary, Dr. Szilard was chief physicist at the metallurgical laboratory of the University of Chicago which during World War II worked on the atomic weapon project. He is one of several outstanding scientist-refugees to the U.S. whose work contributed effectively to the defense of the free world, and is still on the faculty of the University of Chicago. The award was made by the trustees of the Lewis and Rosa Strauss Memorial Fund.

Science News Letter, March 26, 1960

ROCKETS AND MISSILES

Pioneer V Sets Radio Mark in Outer Space

PIONEER V radioed with a strong "voice" back to earth on March 18 from 1,000,090 miles in space to listening scientists, approximately 162 hours after its launch from Cape Canaveral on March 11. The solar satellite continues in its orbit between the earth and Venus.

Scientists and engineers, elated by the satellite's success, hope to be receiving clear signals when the satellite is 50,000,000 miles away five months from now.

Science News Letter, March 26, 1960