

Reducing Costs Of Processing Poultry

Poultry processing costs can be reduced substantially by weighing and packing cut-up poultry parts with a new mechanized system, says the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

USDA's Agricultural Research Service and the University of Georgia Agricultural Experiment Stations cooperated in developing automatic equipment that increases labor productivity and fills packages to desired weights more accurately than manual systems do.

In manual systems a worker often selects seven or eight pieces before he finds one of the right weight to complete the package. In contrast, he can select the right piece immediately when using the mechanized system.

The parts are carried over a belt conveyor, automatically weighed, and sorted into different bins according to their weight. To select the final piece needed to complete a package, the worker presses a button; the equipment then electronically checks the weight of the package and

flashes a light over the bin containing the part of the weight needed, which the worker then places in the package.

The electronic system matches the weight designated on the package label with greater precision than is attained in manual systems. This precision — and the time saved in selecting parts — accounts for the savings obtained by using the new equipment.

USDA Tobacco Health Study

The U. S. Department of Agriculture has awarded nine contracts to the University of Kentucky, Lexington, for research on health-related aspects of tobacco.

These contracts, totaling \$1,119,204, will run concurrently for 2½ years, as part of an intensified research effort by USDA's Agricultural Research Service to identify and learn how to prevent or remove in-

jurious substances from tobacco or tobacco smoke. Funds for the expanded program were appropriated by Congress following release of an advisory committee report to the Surgeon General on smoking and health.

In addition to research conducted under contract, ARS is strengthening its own research at Lexington, in cooperation with the Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station; at Oxford, N. C.; in cooperation with the North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station; at the Eastern utilization research laboratory, Philadelphia; and at Beltsville, Md. All of this research on health-related aspects of tobacco is being coordinated by Dr. Marion W. Parker, Associate Administrator of ARS.

Five of the Kentucky contracts, totaling \$776,624, will support research to develop improved chemical and biological tests that will identify tobacco and smoke components in terms of their effects when applied to animal tissues. Results obtained in these tests will then be used to evalu-

ate the effectiveness of remedial measures that have been proposed or might be developed. Among these measures are (1) the use of chemical modifiers for cigarettes to alter the composition of the smoke; (2) the development,

through breeding, of tobacco varieties free of possible harmful substances; and (3) the development of curing, handling, and marketing methods to prevent metabolic changes that adversely alter tobacco composition.

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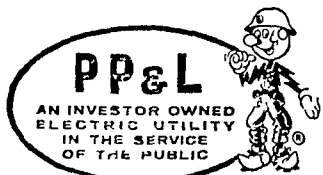
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