

Infected Animals Lost 150 Pounds Each

# Md. Scientists Discover New Steer Virus

Two University of Maryland veterinary science researchers have added another virus to the list of 17 already known to produce respiratory infection in cattle

The new virus, of the herpes group, has not yet been named. But it has been given an interim designation of DN-599. Dr. Sashi B. Mohanty, associate professor of Veterinary Science at College Park, isolated the new virus from samples gathered by Dr. Robert C. Hammond, Extension veterinarian. The samples were collected in a herd of 100 steers last winter in a Frederick County, Maryland, feedlot.

The chain of circumstances leading to discovery of the new virus began when 60 of the steers became noticeably ill about 10 days after they were purchased at auction and taken to the farm. Dr. James McClellan, the local veterinarian, prescribed and administered an antibiotic treatment to curb secondary infection. Then he called on University of Maryland veterinary scientists for help in pinpointing the causative agent.

Since respiratory diseases have been a problem in the state, Dr. Hammond took nasal swabs from some of the steers, many of which were running temperatures of 106°F, had running noses and coughs and exhibited signs of pneumonia. He immediately froze the samples in dry ice and rushed them to the University's animal health laboratories.

Dr. Mohanty injected the swabs into primary bovine embryonic kidney cell cultures and isolated the virus after nine days of incubation.

He then inoculated two healthy calves with the isolate. In five days, the calves began to show typical respiratory disease symptoms. They had temperatures of

106°F, coughs, running noses and pneumonia. After 10 days, the virus was again isolated from tissues of the infected calves.

A control calf, isolated in an adjoining room, remained healthy during the experiment, and laboratory technicians were never able to isolate the virus from him.

After testing for all known bovine viruses and examining the isolate with an electron microscope, Dr. Mohanty concluded there was a good probability that this was a new virus. Further, he could not find antibodies to the virus in serum from 84 other Maryland cattle.

Dr. Hammond reported that all 60 of the infected steers in the Frederick County herd recovered, but they lost an estimated 150 pounds of body weight per steer.

"We will certainly be on guard this winter," the Extension veterinarian said in a recent interview, "because we know so little about the new virus."

"Respiratory virus disease continues to be a problem in Maryland cattle, and we will continue a program of taking nasal swabs and serum samples for diagnostic purposes," he added.

Dr. Hammond and Dr. Mohanty were recently informed that their findings concerning the new virus have been accepted for publication in Archives Ges Virus Forschung (Archives for Virus Research), a highly reputed virology journal published simultaneously in Weir, Norway, and New York, N.Y.

## '71 Turkey Crop Should Be Cut 5%, USDA Says

The USDA, prodded by the National Turkey Federation, has released its 1971 Turkey Marketing Guide about two months ahead of schedule.

The Guide recommends a 1971 crop of not over 109 million turkeys, down five per cent from 1970.

Also breeder hens held for 1971 hatching egg production should be reduced nine per cent from year earlier levels.

Production and marketing costs may increase 1½ cents per pound, the Guide reports.

In addition, demand may be weak during the first six months of 1971 at the same time that competition from pork and other meats will be exceptionally strong.

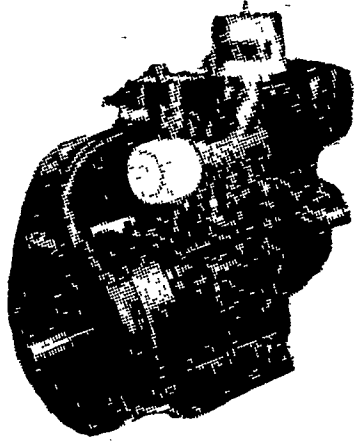
The National Turkey Federation has warned its members that "the industry is headed for extreme financial difficulty next year unless meaningful adjustments are made and made right now!"

If present plans persist, says NTF president, Lloyd Peterson, the "wring-out" years of 1961 and 1967 will appear as a Sunday School picnic by comparison.

Meanwhile, however, NEPPCO reported its information shows persons who raise, dress and sell their own birds are having another good year in the face of strong demand.

But NEPPCO also reported rising costs and labor problems will result in overall lower profits.

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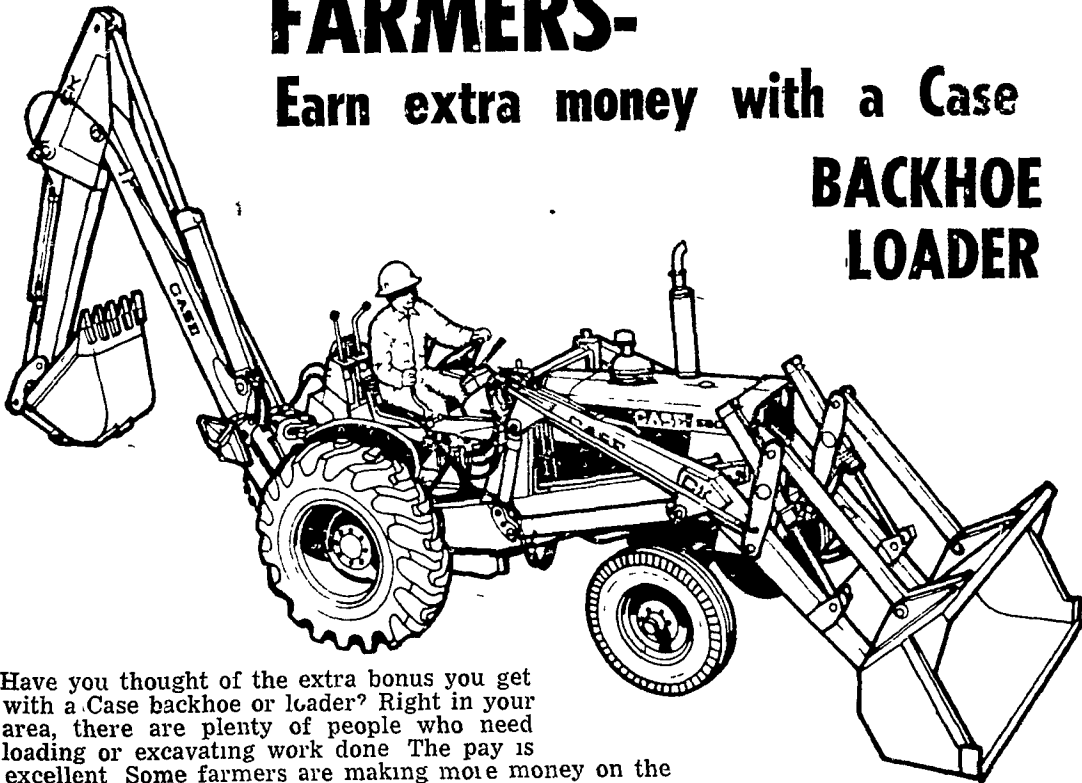
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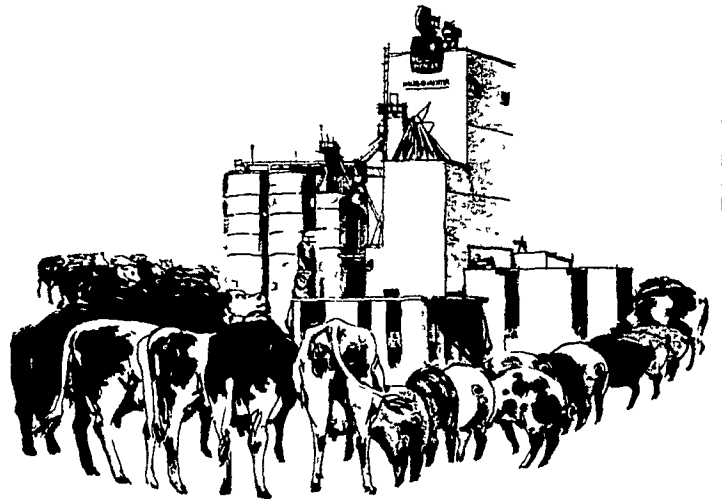
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