

# U.S. Nears Cholera Free Status, Pork Export Markets Eyed

New foreign markets for U.S. pork should be sought by the United States Department of Agriculture now that the nation is nearing its goal of wiping out hog cholera.

This was the recommendation of the National Hog Cholera Eradication Advisory Committee at a recent meeting in Waterloo, Iowa. Chairman of the committee is Dr. Francis J. Mulhern, associate administrator of USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

The incidence of hog cholera in 1971 is at a record low, with only 61 infected herds reported during the first four months. This compares to 226 infected herds reported during the same months a year ago and 247 during the same period in 1969.

It was in light of this progress that the advisory committee recommended exploration of new overseas markets for American pork. It noted that Great Britain, for instance, which eradicated hog cholera in 1967, prohibits American pork imports.

With 40 per cent of the nation's hogs now being produced in hog cholera-free States, the advisory committee was optimistic that this country can achieve final eradication of the disease by the end of 1972.

Under the National Hog Cholera Eradication Program, started in late 1962, the Federal Government cooperates with States in wiping out infection. Owners of herds destroyed because of hog cholera are paid State and

Federal indemnities to help compensate for losses.

The advisory group endorsed steps now being taken to increase the federal Government's share of indemnity up to 90 per cent in States which have already attained hog cholera-free status.

Letters outlining the new indemnity plan have been sent to all State governors by USDA. With the concurrence of States, the goal is to amend regulations so the new plan could become effective early in the coming fiscal year.

Under this plan, States still experiencing hog cholera outbreaks (Phase III of the four-phase program) would continue sharing indemnity costs on a 50-

50 basis. For States with no outbreaks in three months (Phase IV), the Federal indemnity share would be increased to 75 per cent. For States with no outbreaks in 12 months (thus qualifying as "hog cholera free"), the Federal share would be increased to 90 per cent.

The advisory group reiterated its earlier recommendation, however, that increased Federal indemnity shares be conditional upon the States having a satisfactory swine identification system. The ability to trace sick animals to farms of origin is an important weapon in controlling and eliminating swine diseases such as hog cholera. Not all States have identification re-

quirements which will meet this need.

The advisory committee reaffirmed its opposition to the use of vaccines. Hog cholera vaccine can no longer be manufactured for domestic use in the United States. The committee urged anyone holding quantities of this vaccine to dispose of it by burning.

Recognizing the dangers of feeding improperly cooked or raw garbage, the committee urged regulatory action to assure use of proper equipment and procedures. It called on responsible elements of the food waste feeding industry to take the lead in self-policing measures.

The advisory committee asked USDA to continue its efforts in developing the Voluntary Isolation Plan for large herd owners. The plan would reduce the possibility of introducing infectious disease into a herd and limit the spread of disease that might be introduced.

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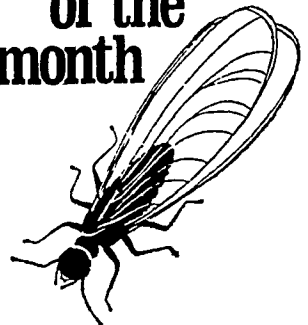
The David Shenk family, EMBMC missionaries in Somali Democratic Republic, arrived in the United States May 24. Their address is 1501 Colebrook Road, Lancaster, Pa. 17601.

And Dr. Vernon and Elizabeth Kratz, EMBMC missionaries in the Somali Democratic Republic, will arrive in the United States June 1. Their temporary address will be RD2, Box 365, Mount Joy, Pa., reports the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities.

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