

Doctor in the Kitchen®
by Laurence M. Hursh, M.D.
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FOOD LABELING — I

A most interesting discussion (not a debate) occurred some weeks ago in Denver at a conference sponsored by the National Dairy Council for food writers. The subject was food labeling and the men airing views that caught my ears most were Dr. Oden Johnson of the Food and Drug Administration and Dr. Dee M. Graham of the University of Missouri.

Each man possesses a background qualifying him to speak on this topic which is of such interest to consumers. But their approaches are different. Dr. Johnson, being Director of the Division of Nutrition with FDA and having been closely involved in developing the new FDA food labeling regulations, is eloquent in support of those regulations. Dr. Graham, Chairman of the Department of Food Science and Nutrition at the University of Missouri, was formerly with a prominent food processing firm so his approach is especially knowledgeable regarding some of the problems the regulations may face.

FDA's Mission

Dr. Johnson explained for the assembled food writers that FDA's mission is to protect the consumer from hazards and obvious fraud. He pointed out that historically FDA has performed this task by police work and in his opinion this has not been sufficiently effective.

Meantime, Dr. Johnson said, times have changed. We have changed from a producing society

to a consuming society. We no longer make the things we use. FDA's approach now must be to give the consumer more information with which to protect and guide himself. Regarding food, this means there must be new food labeling regulations.


The New Regulations

The new regulations, he said, will provide: 1) a mechanism to identify the quality of products; 2) an aid in planning adequate meals; and 3) the stimulus for greater interest in nutrition.

Technically, a food manufacturer will not have to list the nutritional content on his product label. Only if he fortifies his product by adding some nutrient, or wishes to make some claim of dietary benefit does he then "trigger" the requirement for specific information on his label. Of course, the realities of competition—such as a competitor making claims and listing nutritional content—means a food manufacturer could well find that the labeling is not voluntary at all, but essential and forced upon him if he wishes to remain in business.

But if one believes the more information consumers have, the better, such problems as the foregoing are not a deterrent. And once a food processor gets into labeling, what must he list?

We'll get into that next week, along with some of Dr. Graham's apprehensions as to whether all this will actually be good for the consumer.



Ida Risser

We've had our annual family reunion. This time we celebrated my father's 80th birthday. Many of those present drove hours and hours to get there and see how the younger children had grown and to look at picture albums.

The men exchanged views on the National scene and the women exchanged recipes for all those delicious cakes and pies. The children played in groups according to their age or sex and everyone seemed happy.

But, I wonder. How many went home feeling misunderstood? How many were unable to express what really concerned them? Unfortunately, seldom do we dip beneath the surface to share what life really means. Communication and concern are vital in all relationships.

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The corn is growing so tall that I can no longer see any further than the barn. Just a few weeks

ago I could watch Cindy take our old dog "Herbie" for a walk through the woods.

I hear motor noises but not until they are almost at the house do I see the vehicle. When I smell smoke, it is necessary to run upstairs to locate the fire—usually it is a fireplace at one of the summer cottages. I'm surrounded by towering corn.

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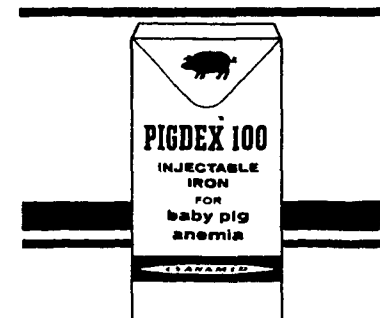
My 4-H Club toured Weaver's of New Holland and saw some of the 70,000 broilers they dress every day being prepared for various types of chicken products. They also process 45,000 dozen eggs and each individual egg must be stamped "U.S." if it is shipped out of the country.

It was interesting to watch each employee do his one small part in preparing the birds. However, with all those sharp knives around I hope they are an amiable group!

Price Freeze Questioned By Industry

Responding to the President's recent 60-day freeze on prices, E. Douglas Kenna, president of the National Association of Manufacturers, said that the Association regretted that President Nixon felt compelled to take the drastic step of imposing the freeze.

Mr. Kenna explained, "We fear that this rigid price restraint may create chaotic conditions in the production and distribution of essential commodities. It leaves an interim period of uncertainty in the business world as everyone is left wondering what system of stabilization will be in effect after the freeze period terminates."



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Farm Women Calendar

Tuesday, August 14
7 p.m. — Farm Women Society 22 meeting, home of Mrs. Amos Miller, 1150 Penn Grant Road, Lancaster.

Saturday, August 18
12 Noon — Farm Women Society 3 Entertain Local 4-H Club, Covered Dish Luncheon, Shady Grove.



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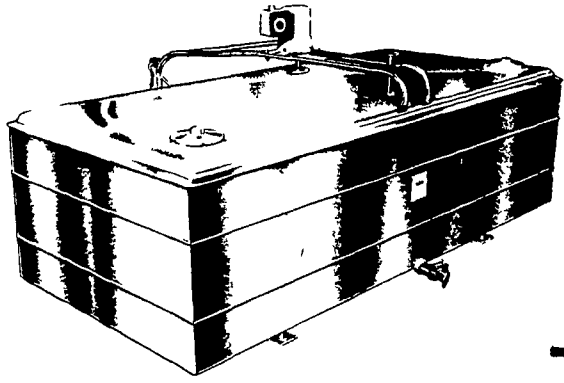
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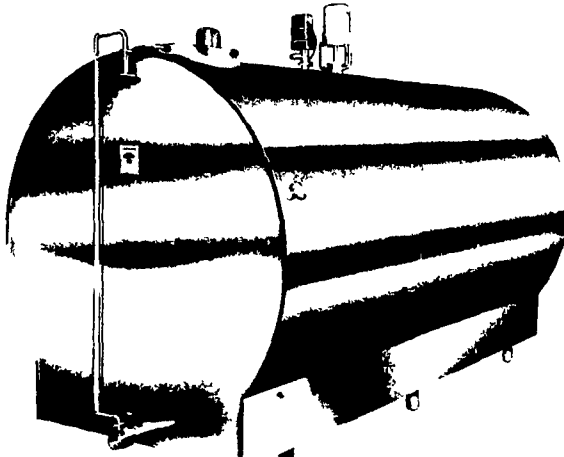
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