

Progress is Seen in Eradicating Disease

Marked progress in eradicating hog cholera and exotic Newcastle disease—two serious livestock diseases—highlighted 1973 animal health activities of the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Hog Cholera

Officials of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) report that only 16 swine herds were found to be infected with hog cholera during 1973 compared with 205 during 1972. They note, furthermore, that all of the 1973 cases occurred prior to July.

The six months since that time is the longest known period without a case of hog cholera since the disease was first recognized in the United States in the early 1830's. An estimated 5,000 to 6,000 swine herds were infected annually before the national eradication campaign began in late 1962.

Newcastle

The last quarantine in southern California for exotic Newcastle—a foreign,

virus disease that is usually fatal to poultry and other birds but harmless to consumers—was lifted in late 1973. A massive outbreak of this disease struck southern California in late 1971. In March 1972, as the disease continued to spread, Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz declared a national emergency and federal and state quarantines were placed on a 45,000-square-mile area to contain the disease.

APHIS eradication efforts involved the destruction of nearly 12 million birds—mostly laying hens—at a cost of more than \$27 million in indemnities to their owners. By early 1973, the disease had been contained and the quarantine area had been reduced to 1,450 square miles. The last case of exotic Newcastle in southern California was reported on June 28, 1973.

Sheep Scabies

In January 1973, the U.S. was officially declared free of sheep scabies—a disease APHIS and cooperating states had been fighting intensively for the 12 previous years. The last case of scabies was found in January 1970. Eradication of the mites which cause this disease will save the nation an estimated \$17 million yearly in projected losses.

Screwworms

The APHIS battle against screwworms in 1973 included both successes and setbacks. The 15,000 screwworm cases

recorded during the year looks good compared with the massive invasion the previous year—some 95,000-plus cases were found in 1972. But the 1973 total was still far above the usual annual level of cases over the ten-year history of the southwestern screwworm eradication program.

Brucellosis

During 1973, one more state—Montana—qualified as a "certified brucellosis-free" area, bringing to 30 the number which have reached this status in the fight against brucellosis in cattle. However, APHIS officials pointed to an increase in the number of brucellosis-infected cattle herds in some areas of the country—particularly the southeast and south central states. To reverse this trend, they called for stepped-up efforts during 1974 in areas where the disease incidence is highest.

Progress in the fight against swine brucellosis during the year included the "validation" of four additional states—Arkansas, Montana, Oregon and Wyoming—as free of swine brucellosis. Mine states have now achieved this status and 21 others are conducting active eradication programs.

Fever Ticks

APHIS animal health officials were also con-

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tinuing the fight against an outbreak of cattle fever ticks around Alice, Tex. In July the cattle fever tick buffer zone along the Rio Grande River was enlarged to include new infestations which had occurred further north in Texas. Dipping and inspection of animals to eradicate the ticks continues.

Cattle Scabies

Efforts against a serious outbreak of cattle scabies in southwestern and mid-western states continued during 1973. A total of 48 infected herds in ten states were located and treated. In 1972, cattle scabies was found in 79 herds in seven states.

VEE

And finally, for the second year in a row there were no cases of Venezuelan equine encephalitis (VEE)—the horse sleeping sickness which invaded 26 south

tinued for VEE.

Continued surveillance and testing of veterinary biologics kept nearly 242 million doses of unsatisfactory products off the market during 1973. APHIS enforces the Virus-Serum-Toxin Act of 1913, designed to ensure that animal vaccines and other veterinary biologics are safe, pure and effective.

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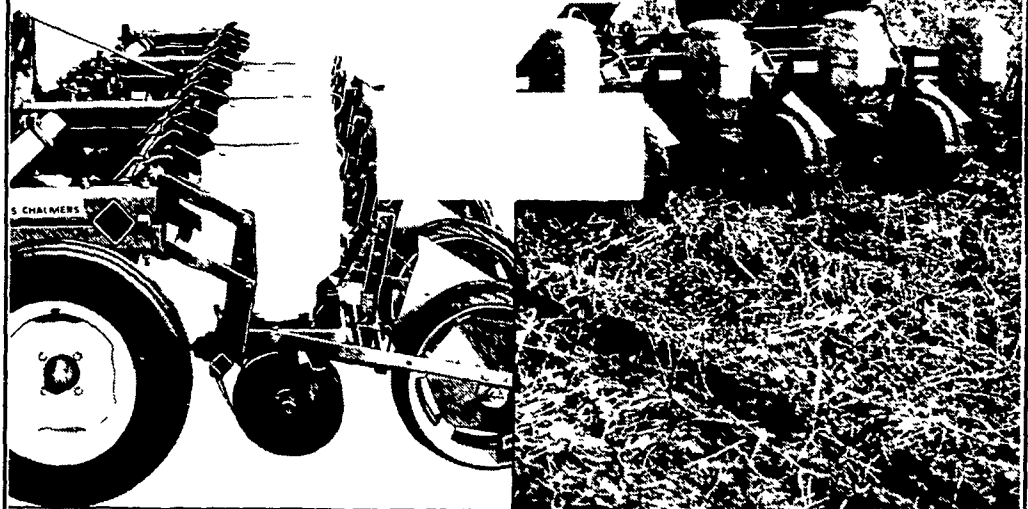
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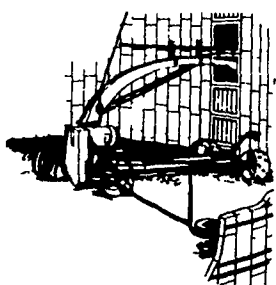


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