

Hog cholera outbreak possibly introduced by outlawed vaccines

The use of hog cholera vaccines, which is outlawed in most states, may have caused the recent hog cholera outbreak in New England, according to officials of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Among states without such laws are New Jersey and Rhode Island, where hog cholera was found in late February, and Massachusetts, where the latest disease episode was noted in early March.

Federal regulations prohibit interstate shipment of cholera vaccines and of vaccinated hogs. Federal licenses to produce hog cholera vaccine were rescinded in 1971.

Deputy Administrator John Hejl of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) says animal health officials have evidence that hog cholera vaccine was being sold in the New England area. "We don't have all the facts nailed down yet. We are continuing an investigation in this area," Dr. Hejl said, adding:

"I was shocked when I learned that vaccines may have been used. The reason we stopped their use more than six years ago was because we knew that in some cases they could actually introduce hog cholera into a herd. Also, vaccines mask infection, making it difficult to spot the disease before it has a chance to spread to other herds.

"Vaccines could jeopardize the whole state-federal hog cholera eradication campaign. Their

use could cause continued outbreaks of this serious swine disease, which in turn would delay eradication, threaten the pork supply of this country and cut off potential export markets for U.S. pork."

Hejl noted that exports of fresh pork to Great Britain had resumed in April 1975, when the United States had been free of hog cholera outbreaks longer than 12 months. "We had growing market with the British," he said, "and we were investigating other foreign market possibilities. This export market was shut off in July 1975 when a hog cholera outbreak occurred in Texas."

Vaccines were restricted as part of the national program to eradicate hog cholera in mid-1969 because they were causing extensive problems and there was no need for protection they might afford. Considerable progress in eliminating hog cholera has been made since then, with only five isolated outbreaks of the disease in the past two and a half years.

Hog cholera is usually fatal to swine, but affects no other farm animals and poses no health hazard to humans. Before the eradication campaign started in 1962, some 5,000 to 6,000 swine herds were infected annually.

APHIS officials urge farmers not to use vaccine and to check freezer lockers for old supplies. They should notify state or federal animal health officials immediately if any hog cholera vaccines are found. The vaccines will be picked

up and destroyed as a means of eliminating this potentially dangerous source of costly outbreaks.

State and federal animal health officials have destroyed 15 infected and 30 exposed herds of swine - involving more than 19,000 animals - to contain and eliminate the latest infection. Nearly \$2.4 million in indemnities have been paid to New England and New Jersey farmers to help compensate them for their losses.

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Charles R. Black, Jr., Chairman of NCPAC, in announcing the endorsement said: "After careful consideration of all candidates in the race for Congress in the 16th District, we have determined that Bob Walker is the best qualified candidate in the Republican primary."

"Walker is definitely committed to the goals of reducing runaway government spending, halting inflation, controlling Federal interference in the everyday affairs of our citizens and helping restore adequate defense capabilities of our nation."

"We are convinced," Black continued, "that Bob Walker has the maturity, judgement and experience to help lead the fight against excessive government and to

be an effective voice for the citizens of the 16th District of Pennsylvania."

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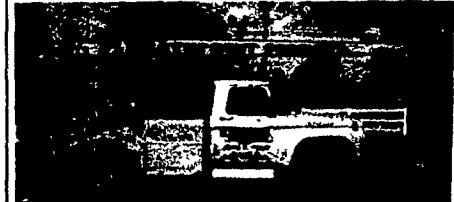
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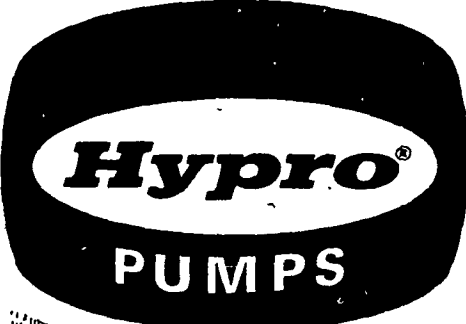
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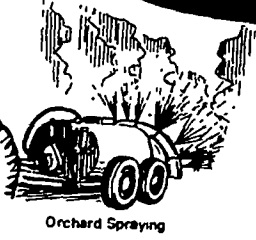
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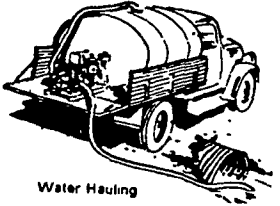


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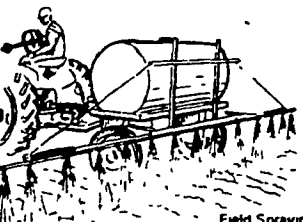


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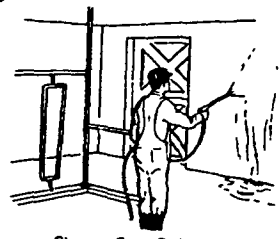


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