

PCB contamination report submitted to congress

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Department of Agriculture was hampered by technological and administrative weaknesses in responding to a recent incident of polychlorinated biphenyl contamination of

meat, poultry and egg products in the western United States, according to a report submitted to the House Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. "We made a com-

prehensive examination of this incident, and found a number of instances where our response was delayed, our technology, legislative authority and resources inadequate, and our personnel not sufficiently aware

of the gravity of the situation," said Carol Tucker Foreman, assistant secretary of agriculture for food and consumer services. "This critical assessment will enable us to make changes in important areas that will leave us far better prepared to grapple with the potential food contamination problems of the 1980's," Foreman said.

According to Foreman, USDA is taking the following actions as a result of the incident:

Together with the Food and Drug Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency, USDA's Food Safety and Quality Service is formulating proposals to ban the installation of any new PCB-containing equipment in food processing plants, and possibly to eliminate PCB-containing equipment presently in food processing plants.

USDA has established a comprehensive emergency response system for dealing with environmental contamination, and systematically lays out actions to be taken in an emergency from initial detection to final clean-up.

The specific responsibilities of each involved USDA component, and the organization of a 'response team' are described, for use whenever mobilization to control and eliminate contamination of the food supply becomes necessary.

USDA will request legislative authority to quarantine suspect animals on the farm, and to enable faster and more accurate tracing of the source of contamination problems, through mandatory owner identification of all animals sent to slaughter

Expanded training and education of USDA personnel will emphasize public health and economic consequences of environmental contamination in the food supply.

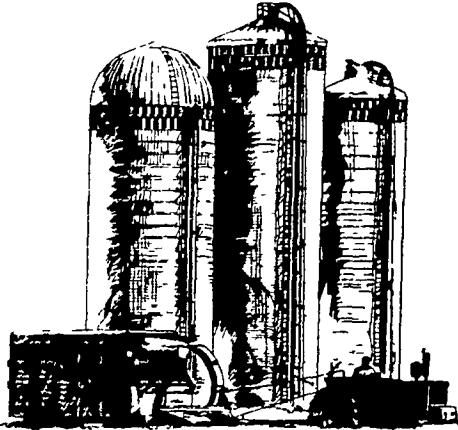
USDA will increase research efforts to find quicker, more effective tests for chemical residues in food.

Foreman said the present USDA residue sampling system was not designed to detect each incident of residues in food animals, but, she said, USDA is now examining ways to provide greater assurance of a food supply free from contamination including increased and earlier sam-

pling, expanded research in new detection techniques, a broadened information base, and greater reliance on private sampling.

The PCB contamination incident came to light in August through routine testing under a residue monitoring program of USDA's Food Safety and Quality Service. After a tissue sample from a laying hen showed high levels of PCB, the source of contamination was traced to meat meal manufactured at a slaughtering and by-product plant in Billings, Mont., where a ruptured transformer leaked PCB into the processing system.

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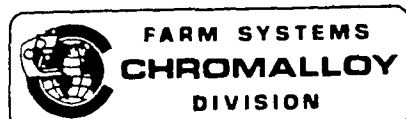
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Confederate is top-priced Angus bull at National Western

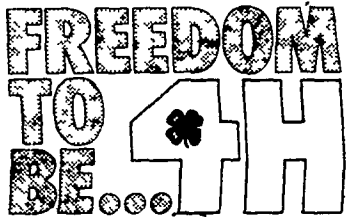
ST. JOSEPH, Mo. — The Stadium Auction Arena was packed with an enthusiastic crowd for the 1980 National Western Angus Bull Sale, where 57 lots averaged \$5,554, reports Bill Roche, manager of the sale for the American Angus Association.

Confederate, high-selling bull and grand champion of the sale bull show, brought a top bid of \$33,000 for two-thirds interest. He was consigned and shown by James Hicks, M.D., Union Springs, Alabama, and sold to Midwest Breeders, Shawna, Wisconsin.

The second high-selling bull brought \$19,000 for two-thirds interest. He was Gallaghers Patriot 909, the

sale bull calf champ consigned by Radar Farm, Bridgewater, Connecticut. He sold to Rushmore Angus, Rapid City, South Dakota.

Reserve grand and reserve senior champion sale bull, Pinkertons Emulous F666, shown by UT Ranch, Tuttle, Oklahoma, sold for \$10,500 to Ferguson Ranch, Inc., Cheyenne, Wyoming.

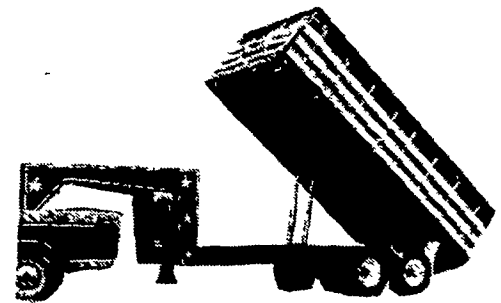


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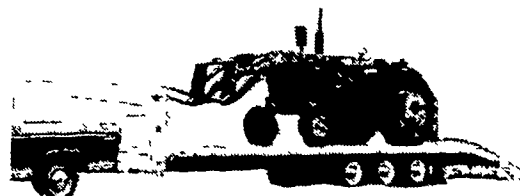
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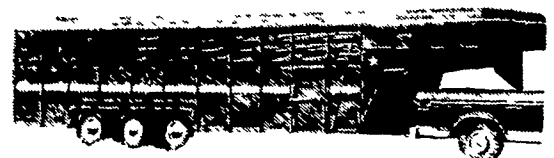
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