

# Bertrand says food, ag needs improved technology base

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz., — To continue as the principal contributor to world trade without depleting its natural resources, the United States must find ways to maintain and improve its technology base in food and agriculture — from production to processing to distribution, a U.S. Department of Agriculture official told a food industry group recently.

Speaking at the 20th Food and Drug Law Institute's Food Update '81 Conference, Anson R. Bertrand, USDA's director of science and education, said "Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block recognized this need and has called for an increase in the agricultural research budget."

The annual conference is a seminar for professionals and executives from leading food manufacturers, distributors, food industry suppliers and related industries.

Bertrand described some of the research goals USDA's Science and Education Administration has set to meet U.S. food and nutritional needs.

"Of course, all of our research priorities must be established within the limitations set by the broad concerns of the USDA and the nation," he said. These concerns, he said, include our finite natural resources of energy and the need to increase productivity.

"USDA food utilization research is aimed at reducing processing costs; improving products through innovative and improved processing technologies; increasing efficiency by reducing energy needed to process and handle foods; optimizing nutrient retention, and providing new foods that are high in quality and safe for consumers," he said.

The need for the federal government to become involved in or to continue each particular line of agricultural research must be carefully examined, Bertrand said.

"Obviously, if the research benefits only a few, if it would be more appropriate for a particular industry to carry out the research, or if other institutions already have better capabilities to conduct the research, it would not be appropriate for the federal government to take the lead."

Bertrand said research and development projects are the

foundation for continuing progress in all of this nation's industries.

USDA's research, he said, affects the food industry directly and indirectly. Often, this research supplies the fundamental information needed by the food industry to develop new or improved products. Sometimes, basic research findings lead to developments that far exceeded the

researcher's expectation.

"Private industry has an enormous capacity for translating basic research results into practical application and putting them within the reach of farmers, ranchers, businessmen and consumers," he said.

Bertrand said agriculture depends on a rapidly expanding export market for food and feed

commodities and the nation relies on exports to help offset the growing U.S. deficit in international trade.

"We must increase agricultural productivity to meet the anticipated 60 to 85 percent increase in demand for U.S. agricultural products by the year 2000," he said.

## Brucellosis indemnities cut 20 percent

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A shortage of brucellosis eradication funds has forced U.S. Department of Agriculture officials to order a 20-percent across-the-board cut in indemnities paid for brucellosis affected cattle, effective May 1.

Paul Becton, director of the national brucellosis eradication program for USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, said the cut was necessary to make sure indemnity funds were available through the remainder of the fiscal year, which ends September 30.

"If we had continued to pay brucellosis indemnities at existing rates, there would have been no funds to compensate owners of brucellosis reactor cattle during the last three months of the current fiscal year," Becton said.

Program standards under the cooperative state-federal brucellosis eradication program require cattle to be slaughtered if they react positively to brucellosis tests. Indemnities for registered cattle are based on a percentage of each animal's appraised value, less the salvage paid when the animal is sent to slaughter.

This percentage is 88.5 percent,

but the calculated indemnity is now reduced by 20 percent.

Non-registered dairy cattle indemnities are fixed at a flat rate within each state, based on current market values. These flat rates will be reduced by 20 percent, Becton explained. Other non-registered cattle have been indemnified at the rate of \$62 per head, but under the spending cut, the rate is reduced to \$50 per head.

Brucellosis in cattle, also called Bang's disease or contagious abortion, is an easily spread bacterial infection of domestic animals, especially cattle and swine. It can be transmitted to humans, where it is known as undulant fever. However, it is not a hazard to people who eat meat and pasteurized dairy products.

Currently, 31 entire states have

been classified as certified brucellosis-free under the eradication program. Except for six counties in Florida and Louisiana and the Yellowstone National Park, all remaining counties in the country are either certified free or in modified-certified status, which indicates that they are progressing toward eradication.

## Research Associate joins U. of Delaware Soil Test Lab

NEWARK, Del. — David R. Parker has assumed responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the University of Delaware soil testing laboratory, effective April 27.

The new soil research associate holds degrees in soil science from the University of Vermont and Oregon State University. While at Oregon he studied the behavior of boron in acidic soils in the western part of the state for his master's thesis.

At Delaware, Parker will be responsible for laboratory equipment upkeep, improving methodology and investigating new soil testing procedures.

His presence will relieve

laboratory supervisor Leo Cotnoir of these routine duties so that Cotnoir can spend more time working on soil test recommendations and participate more fully in soil fertility information programs at the University. This will involve working more closely with county Extension agents.



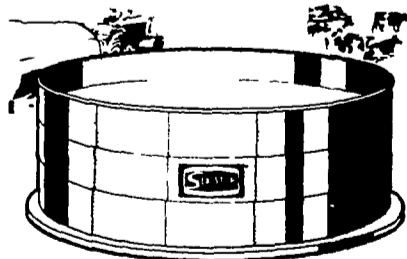
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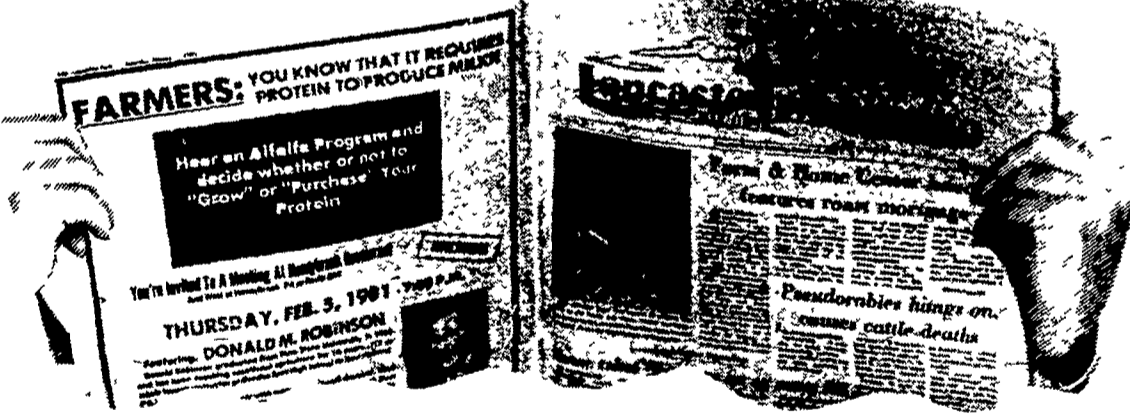
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