

# New FDA Labeling Requirements Mean Added Safety For Asthmatics

UNIVERSITY PARK — Asthmatics who are trying to avoid sulfite-treated foods will have some help beginning this month, when the Food and Drug Administration starts requiring labels on those foods.

Sulfites, which are used in some foods and alcoholic beverages as preservatives, can cause allergic reactions ranging from mild to severe, according to Manfred Kroger, professor of food science in Penn State's College of Agriculture. People with asthma

are particularly at risk, especially those who are taking steroid drugs to control their illness. Other people need not be concerned, he said.

Under the new FDA regulations, which took effect Jan. 9, processed foods that contain 10 parts per million or more of sulfites will have to identify sulfite in their ingredient listings.

As of August of 1986, fresh fruits and vegetables (with the exception of potatoes) cannot be treated with sulfites, Kroger said.

Sulfites commonly had been used on salad bars to keep vegetables fresh and unwilted. However, even with the new ban on sulfites in fresh produce, consumers should be aware that other items on salad bars such as potato salad, canned vegetables and fruits, pickled vegetables, pickles and olives may still contain the chemicals.

Only recently have scientists become aware of the allergic reactions sulfites can cause, Kroger said. "It is said now that

about 10 people have died because of sulfites that were used in restaurants," he said. "The first death was recorded only two years ago. Even in the 10 cases we now have, the causes of half of them are disputed."

More commonly, sulfites cause allergic reactions such as difficulty in breathing and hives. Almost always the person affected has asthma, Kroger said. Estimates of the number of asthmatic Americans range from 180,000 severe cases up to 10

million, of whom about one million may be sensitive to sulfites to some degree.

Not every sulfite-containing product has been regulated so far, Kroger said. Potatoes are not under the current ban on fresh products, but probably will be added this year, he said. Sulfites are also found in beer, wine, cocktail mixes and wine coolers. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms plans to issue labeling regulations for them later in 1987, Kroger said. Alcoholic beverages are not regulated by the FDA.

As many as 1,100 medications also contain sulfites. "Ironically, even some asthma medications contain sulfites," Kroger said. Other drugs that could contain them include anti-nausea medicine, painkillers, antibiotics and steroids. Most are intravenous or spray-type products; very few are oral medications. The FDA already requires lists of all ingredients on injectable prescription products, and is expected to write regulations for drugs prescribed for oral use this year.

Kroger said many people who are allergic to sulfites don't know it. Their reactions to the chemicals could depend on the food they are eating, the dose of sulfite and the allergic state they are in at the time, he said.

More so than others, people with food allergies and sensitivities must know their body reactions, read food labels and learn about what's in the food they eat, Kroger said.

## Delaware 4-H Horse Expo Set For Feb. 14

NEWARK, Del. — The fourth annual Delaware Horse Expo set for Saturday, Feb. 14, at the Hartly Fire Hall will include an all-day educational program, a used tack and equipment sale and an arts and crafts contest with a horse

theme.

Sponsored by the Delaware 4-H Horse Advisory Committee and the Delaware Cooperative Extension System, the event is scheduled from 8 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Club, breed and commercial exhibits

will be included.

The Horse Expo is open to anyone interested in horses as a hobby or a career and in horseback riding as a form of recreation or competitive sport.

The Expo morning session will include talks on nutrition, signs and treatment of colic, hunter equitation and the management and sale of horses.

During the lunch break, from 11:45 a.m. to 2 p.m., a "Horse Bowl" patterned after the "College Bowl" program will be held. Teams made up of youth groups such as 4-H, Pony Club and FFA will answer horse-related questions.

The afternoon session will include a discussion of taxes and horsemen, breaking and training the young horse and hay and pasture management. The day-long program will conclude with a talk titled "Why Own a Horse" by

Jay Mele, a trainer and breeder of paint and quarter horses in Whitinsville, Mass.

Used tack, show clothing, boots and other equipment in good repair will be offered for sale throughout the day. Prizes in various age categories will be awarded in the arts and crafts contest, which will include fine arts and photography. Some of these arts and crafts will be offered for sale.

Pre-registration for the all-day event is \$2 for youths and \$5 for adults. Registration at the door will be \$3 for youths and \$7 for adults.

To register, send a check payable to the Delaware 4-H Horse Advisory Committee to the State 4-H Office, Townsend Hall, University of Delaware, Newark, DE 19717-1303.

For further information, contact the state 4-H office at (302) 451-2509.

## Cattlemen Honor Debbie Mather

ITHACA, N.Y. — Debbie Mather of Marcellus was named "Cattlemaster of the Year" Jan. 10 during the annual convention of the New York cattlemen at the Sheraton Inn here.

She was cited for her years of service to the New York Cattlemen, including serving as secretary/treasurer for six years as president in 1984 and 1985, and currently as recording secretary. She was chairman of the 1986 Empire Farm Days Beef Barbecue, and with her husband, Jim, was co-chairman of the same fund raising project for the New York Cattlemen and the New York Beef Cattlemen's Association from 1981-1983. She was also chairman of the Cattlemen's State Fair exhibit for four years.

She is employed as an aide at the Marcellus Central School. Her husband is a beef and dairy farmer and the family also raises horses, which they show at the county and state fair. The couple has four children, Kristy, Andy, Jeff and Amy.

The New York Cattlemen heard reports of the many 1986 activities and made plans for 1987 projects. Mrs. Eleanor Carlson of Wyoming was named chairman of the New York Beef Recipe Contest

and will announce details of the competition soon. Mrs. Irene Andersen of Long Eddy will be chairman of the annual Beef For Father's Day promotion.

Lisa Hauman of Penn Yan will serve a second year as Beef Ambassador. She was given a \$50 savings bond in appreciation of her work as Ambassador for 1986.

Elaine Swiler of Cameron was named the Cattlemen's delegate to the New York Farm City Council annual meeting Jan. 30 at Cortland. New York Cattlemen president Eldora Benson of Potsdam will attend the annual meeting of the American National Cattlemen in Denver later this month. She has been named chairman of the Region I consumer relations committee.

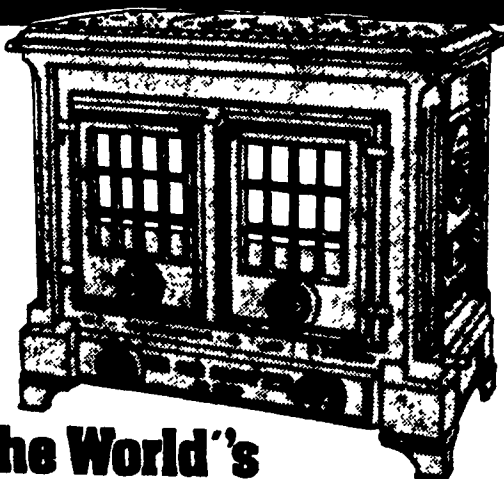
Emphasis this year will be placed on encouraging membership of all women involved in the state's beef industry. "Our dues are only \$3 a year but we do need membership numbers if we are to do an effective job in consumer education and product promotion that will benefit all producers," Mrs. Benson said. She said 1987 dues of \$3 should be sent to Fay Briggs, CR 210, Deposit, N.Y. 13754.



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