



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
FEDERAL CENTER, DENVER 25, COLORADO

October 11, 1962

Dr. R. A. Kehoe
Kettering Laboratory
College of Medicine--Eden Ave.
Cincinnati 19, Ohio

Dear Dr. Kehoe:

I believe that your criticism of our article on lead in Science is well taken. We did not intend to suggest that tetraethyl lead occurs in plants as such and enclose a copy of a letter of explanation to the Editor that we have just written. We hope that this straightens out the confusion.

However, it is fairly certain that the contamination originates from tetraethyl lead that has been added to gasoline and that the lead is eventually being breathed and eaten by stock and people. I agree that the lead is probably inorganic at this later stage and that this makes the lead much less dangerous than if it had remained in an organic form.

I have read your statements on behalf of the Ethyl Corporation at the hearings in Los Angeles. The data presented was based on the lead content of blood. Wouldn't analyses of hair and teeth give additional information on the excess lead that might be stored in the bones throughout the life of the individual? In any event it has not been proved that these increments of lead have no long term affect on animal health. I hope that your foundation will continue to study the health aspects of this problem.

Sincerely yours,

Helen Cannon

Helen L. Cannon, Geologist
Branch of Geochemical Census

HLC:st

Encl.

October 11, 1962

To the Editor
Science
1515 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.
Washington 5, D.C.

Dear Editor:

In reply to the criticisms directed at our September 7 article on "Contamination of vegetation by tetraethyl lead," we did not intend to suggest that tetraethyl lead occurs in plant tissues as such. That the contamination originates from the tetraethyl added to gasoline seems real enough, but the lead that eventually is concentrated in the plant tissues in all likelihood occurs in an inorganic form. We apologize for the misleading statement in the abstract.

Sincerely yours,

HLC:st

Helen L. Cannon and Jessie Bowles
Branch of Geochemical Census

cc: Dr. R. A. Kehoe ✓

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