

January 11, 1937.

Mr. S. S. Yates, President,
Chisle Development Company,
500 Fifth Avenue,
New York City.

Dear Mr. Yates:

Re: X.

I annex a copy of the December 31st
announcement by the United States Department of Agri-
culture regarding fruit and vegetable spray residue.
I am sending a copy as usual to all our associates.

Cordially yours,

Charles Wesley Dunn

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December 31, 1934.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES COMMITTEE
TO AID DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S RESEARCH
PROGRAM ON FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SPRAY RESIDUE

At the request of Secretary of Agriculture Wallace, the National Academy of Sciences, through its president, Dr. Frank B. Lillie, has appointed a committee of nationally-known scientists for the exclusive purpose of reviewing the research program on the toxicity of lead and arsenic now under way in the Food and Drug Administration. The Committee appointed by Dr. Lillie, now holding its first meeting in Washington, consists of Professor A. J. Carlson of the University of Chicago, Chairman, Professor G. F. Brinker of Harvard University, Doctor Ludvig Hektoen, McCormick Institute for Infectious Diseases and Chairman of the National Research Council, Professor H. C. Sherman of Columbia University, and Professor Torald Sollmann of Western Reserve University School of Medicine.

The problem of the degree of toxicity of lead and arsenic occurring in the form of spray residues on fruits and vegetables has long been a troublesome one. Fruit and vegetable growers are obliged to use lead arsenate sprays to guard their crops against insect pests. Such sprays are useless unless they are sufficiently poisonous to destroy the insects. The residues remaining, if in sufficient quantity, are also dangerous to consumers. There is no difference of opinion among scientists as to the poisonous character of both lead and arsenic. Authorities differ only upon the amounts of these poisons which may be consumed without damage to health.

The Food and Drug Administration of the Department of Agriculture has for years been carrying on a campaign under the Food and Drugs Act to remove from the market consignments of fruits and vegetables bearing what are considered dangerous amounts of poisonous residues. Other bureaus of the Department have developed washing methods and appliances for the removal of excess residues before the products are shipped, and these are in very general use, particularly in the apple industry. The present tolerances were adopted on the basis of advice given by a committee of nationally-known toxicologists called together for consultation about ten years ago. That committee, in recommending the tentative tolerances which are essentially those now in effect, recommended further researches designed to fill out some of the gaps in scientific knowledge on the subject and determine more conclusively than has heretofore been possible at what fixing permanent tolerances for lead and arsenic should be set to guarantee public health protection.

With an increase in appropriation for the enforcement of the Food and Drugs Act granted the Department two years ago

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by Congress, the Food and Drug Administration organized a Division of Pharmacology under the leadership of Dr. Edwin E. Nelson, who was furloughed by the University of Michigan, for the purpose of selecting competent personnel and formulating a comprehensive program of research on the toxicity of lead and arsenic as well as on other problems. Having completed the organization of the division, Dr. Nelson returned to the University of Michigan on October 1, where he now occupies the position of Professor of Pharmacology. He continues to assist the division, however, in a consulting capacity. Dr. Nelson was succeeded as chief of the division by Dr. Herbert O. Calvery, an experienced bio-chemist, who holds a Ph. D. from the University of Illinois, has had teaching experience at the Louisville Medical School, Johns Hopkins Medical School, and the University of Michigan Medical School. The complete staff of the division consists of twelve technically trained men, including 8 biochemists and nutritionists, 3 pharmacologists, and one pathologist.

As the first and most important subject for consideration by the new division, Dr. Nelson and Dr. Calvery outlined the research project for the study of the toxicity of lead and arsenic, which will be continued over a period of some years, with the objective of giving a scientific answer to the question as to what are safe tolerances for these poisonous substances. Secretary Wallace requested the National Academy of Sciences to appoint its committee, to furnish the Department unbiased, competent scientific advice as to this investigation.

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