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Chemical in fish known

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—The largest fish wholesaler on Lake Pepin knew since January 1971 that carp taken from the lake contained excessive amounts of an industrial chemical, a spokesman for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration said.

Darryl Brown, laboratory chief for the MFinneapolis office of the FDA, said the federal agency has periodically inspected fish being shipped by Rudolph Hogue, owner of Lake Pepin Fisheries, Pepin, Wis.

Brown said a test by the FDA in January 1971 showed 40 parts per million (ppm) of polychlorinated biphenyl in fish which Hogue had taken from Lake Pepin. The federal limit on PCB is 5 ppm.

FDA tests in mid 1973 showed 10 and 7 ppm of the chemical present in carp taken from the lake by Hogue, Brown said, and a July 1974 test showed 10 to 18 ppm of the chemical in the fish.

He said Sorensen's Fish Market, Bay City, Wis., another much smaller fish wholesaler, was notified last September that fish he had taken from the lake contained 18 to 20 ppm of PCB.

Last month the FDA prevented the interstate shipping and sale of 30 tons of carp Hogue had taken mostly from Lake Pepin because of excessive levels of PCB.

Brown said the FDA had not acted earlier to stop the interstate sale of the fish because it had not been clear whether the agency had jurisdiction. However, he said the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in February that the FDA does have jurisdiction over additives such as PCB, which are not intentionally added during processing of food.

Hogue in May called for an investigation by Minnesota and Wisconsin pollution officials to determine the source of the pollution in Lake Pepin, a widening of the Mississippi River bordering the two states.

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