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EC56-118 Revised 1956 Questions and Answers about the Clean Wheat Program

Donald J. Lehr

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EC 56-118

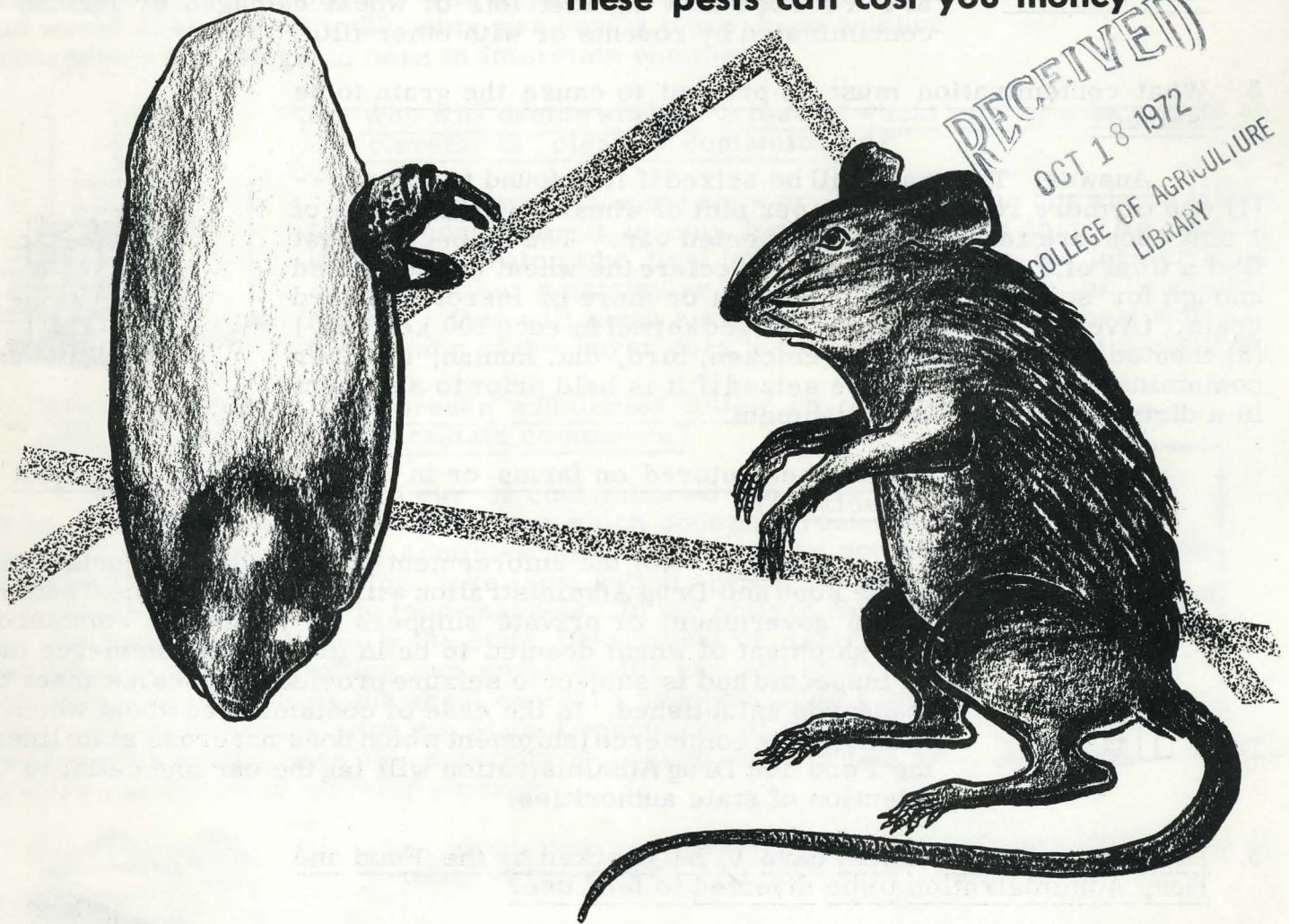
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**QUESTIONS &
ANSWERS**

ABOUT....

THE CLEAN WHEAT PROGRAM

If you store or ship grain,
these pests can cost you money



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Questions And Answers On The Clean Wheat Program

Donald J. Lehr
Extension Grain Marketing Specialist

1. What is the clean wheat program?

Answer: The clean wheat program insures cleaner, more edible food products made from wheat. The educational phase of the program is carried on by the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Extension Service, and numerous other organizations. The enforcement part of the program is a function of the Food and Drug Administration. Under the Federal Pure Food Law, grain in interstate transit is inspected and seized if it contains a certain degree of contamination. The grain is then declared unfit for human food and must be used as livestock feed, converted into alcohol, or taken out of food channels through other processes.



2. What agency will be in charge of the inspection and seizure proceedings?

Answer: The Department of Health, Education and Welfare has directed the Food and Drug Administration to sample cars of wheat and other grains and to institute legal action under the Federal Pure Food Law against lots of wheat damaged by insects or contaminated by rodents or with other filth.

A simple line drawing of a rectangular sign with the text "FOOD AND DRUG ADM." and a small circle below it.

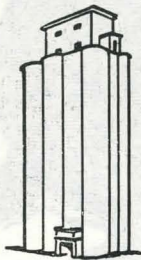
3. What contamination must be present to cause the grain to be seized?

Answer: The grain will be seized if it is found to contain -- (1) one or more rodent pellets per pint of wheat. (Five probes of 1 pint each are taken in each inspected car. The inspector must find a total of 5 or more pellets to declare the wheat contaminated enough for seizure.) (2) one percent or more of insect-damaged grain. (Average of one insect damaged kernel in each 100 kernels.) (3) treated or pink wheat. (4) chicken, bird, cat, human, or other contamination. It can also be seized if it is held prior to shipment in a dirty, unsanitary establishment.



4. Is wheat stored on farms or in country elevators subject to seizure?

Answer: No, the enforcement phase under the jurisdiction of the Food and Drug Administration will apply only to wheat shipped by the government or private shippers in interstate commerce. Any shipment of wheat deemed to be in interstate commerce may be inspected and is subject to seizure provided it does not meet the standards established. In the case of contaminated wheat which is in intrastate commerce (shipment which does not cross state lines), the Food and Drug Administration will tag the car and call it to the attention of state authorities.



5. Does contaminated wheat have to be checked by the Food and Drug Administration to be diverted to feed use?

Answer: No, flour millers and wheat processors maintain high standards of quality -- not only are they interested in giving a better product to the general public, but they are also subject to FDA regulations. Well established inspection programs insure that the products they buy and sell meet FDA requirements. About 25 cars of wheat on the Omaha and Lincoln markets in 1956, even



though not inspected by FDA, sold for a reduced price because of excess rodent or insect contamination.



6. Who is responsible for losses in case of seized grain?

Answer: The shipper (whether terminal, country elevator, or individual) is responsible for any losses incurred.

7. How much dollar loss is involved on a car of seized wheat?

Answer: The actual dollar loss may vary considerably and will depend on conditions involved with the particular shipment. However, it is reasonable to assume that the losses involved in the seizure of the car of wheat (1800 bushels) may exceed \$1500-\$2000. Here is an example: Recently, a car of wheat shipped to the Omaha market by a Nebraska shipper was inspected by the Food and Drug Administration. It was found to contain an average of 4.4 mouse pellets per pint which is more than the established limit. Since this car was not involved in interstate commerce, state authorities were notified that the car of wheat was "unfit for human consumption." As a result, this car of wheat which would have brought \$2.35 per bushel if not contaminated was sold for feed purposes at \$1.70 per bushel. The shipper lost 65 cents per bushel and would have lost 15 to 25 cents per bushel more from seizure proceedings had the grain been in interstate commerce.

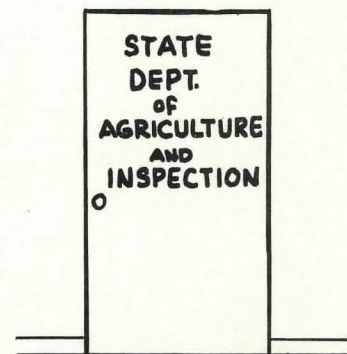


8. Who will decide whether a load of wheat sold by a farmer to an elevator is "clean or contaminated?"

Answer: Since the shipper of grain is the one who is liable for its condition, it is only logical to assume that the country elevator operator who first buys the wheat from the farmer must decide whether a particular load of wheat is "clean" or "contaminated". This will mean a substantial discount for wheat which in the opinion of the buyer does not meet the established standards.

9. What procedure will Nebraska authorities follow in case of contaminated wheat in intrastate commerce?

Answer: Whenever a car of contaminated wheat is found to be in intrastate commerce (shipment which does not cross state lines) by the Food and Drug Administration inspector, he notifies state authorities who may then take legal action against the car to prevent its being utilized in food channels. In the state of Nebraska, the inspector will notify the State Department of Agriculture and Inspection. This office can embargo the car and declare it "off sale," in which case the wheat cannot be processed into human food. Food inspectors with the State Department of Agriculture and Inspection also have the authority to inspect food grains in country and terminal elevator storage.



10. Must sanitation requirements be met before a wheat loan is granted by the A. S. C.?

Answer: The FDA grain sanitation requirements are a definite part of the Wheat Loan program. First, the wheat must meet the FDA requirements to be eligible for a loan. Then, at reinspection time if evidence of insects or rodents is found, special precautions must be taken to care for the grain. Wheat is inspected 30 days before delivery and at delivery, and must meet the



sanitary requirements at these inspections. If found to be contaminated, the price is discounted to feed value.

How can farmers and elevator operators best protect themselves from losses?

- Answer:
- (1) Store only clean, dry grain.
 - (2) Store in a birdproof, ratproof, and weatherproof bin.
 - (3) Spray bin and surrounding area with a residual insecticide (5% solution of methoxychlor) before storing grain.
 - (4) Never mix old and new grain.
 - (5) Inspect grain for heating and insects every two to three weeks.
 - (6) Fumigate at the first sign of insect activity.
 - (7) Control rodents the year round with anti-coagulant poison baits.
 - (8) Ship in clean carriers.
 - (9) Prior to sale, skim off top 3" to 6" of wheat and use for feed.



12. Where can I obtain additional information about the "Clean Wheat Program"?

Answer: See your County Extension Agent for the latest information available about the "Clean Wheat Program". Your County Extension Agent can also supply you with information and circulars on bin spraying, grain fumigation, and rodent control.

