Cyclamates Founder Claims Ban Was Big Booboo

By JAMES V. HEALON
STAMFORD, Conn. — (UPI)
—Michael Sveda says science wasn't the basic reason for the removal of cyclamates from the market in 1969 and that science by itself isn't going to bring them back in 1974. Some public indignation might help, he says.

Sveda, 62, who discovered cyclamates in the 1930s through a "lucky accident" or as he also puts it, "scientific serendipity," is indignant when he talks about the Food and Drug Administration's reluctance to restore the inexpensive sugar substitute to the market.

"They don't want to publicly admit they made a mistake in the first place," says Sveda who has maintained the 1969 ban was rooted in a blunder by the FDA the National Academy of Sciences and sugar-lobby intrigue.

And now, he says, Dr. Virgil O. Wodicka, director of the EDA's bureau of foods, said in a recent letter to a manufacturer that multiple variables in the 1969 testing that led to the ban "make it impossible to pinpoint cyclamates" as the cause of cancer in laboratory rats then being tested.

So, as Sveda sees it, there was no scientific basis for the recommendation Oct. 17, 1969, by the National Academy of Sciences to take cyclamates off the GRAS (generally regarded as safe list), a suggestion the FDA accepted immediately.

Sveda says the following day became "sour Saturday" when Robert Finch, then secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, ordered cyclamates removed from the market. Finch then emphasized in the "strongest possible terms that we have no evidence at this point that cyclamates have indeed caused cancer to humans."

GUILTY BY ASSOCIATION

Despite the disclaimer by Finch, and the continued use of cyclamates in many other countries, Sveda claims some people have linked cyclamates to cancer in humans and have found him guilty by association.

He says he has no financial ax to grind in the restoration of cyclamates to the American market. The patent ran out in 1973 and he says he has no connection with Abbott Laboratories of North Chicago, Ill., a prime mover in seeking their return.

The FDA is considering Abbott's petition to lift the cyclamate ban but the agency has told Abbott and Sveda it doesn't believe there is sufficient evidence to reverse the decision.

What Sveda calls a "massive blunder" in the independent testing paid for by Abbott in 1969 and done by a Maspeth, N.Y., laboratory occurred when rats where fed a mixture of cyclamates, saccharin and cyclamin during the two year test period which wasn't for cancer but for general effects.

Tumors were found in the bladders of eight rats, and Abbott notified the FDA.

Sveda, quoting one authority, rats shouldn't be used in such tests because they are predisposed to such tumors, regardless of what they are fed. The animals were fed a mixture—a 10 to 1 measure of cyclamates and saccharin that Abbott used in its commercial product, but were never fed cyclamates exclusively.

Cortes Pioneer
Sugar Planter

NEW YORK — (AP) — Hernando Cortes, conquistador of Mexico, appears to have been a pioneer sugar planter, also. A grant in 1529 gave him "five leagues from the city of Vera Cruz," a little village named La Riconada — the Indians called it "Yzocalon" — where he built a sugar mill, according to Sugar Association historians here.

Cortes built a second mill near Tetecala in the state of Morelos, using stones from the pyramid at Xochicalco. It's still there on the Rio de Cana and is called El Ingenio. A third factory at Atlicacomas was still working in 1541.

The Cortes connection with sugar continued even after his death. In a will dated Aug. 6, 1540, Cortes ordered that inquiry be made about land he had given his steward to enable him to establish sugar works near Cuoyocan.

Denver Housewives
Received Sugar

An oversupply of sugar held for rationing during World War II by the War Price and Rationing Board was distributed to Denver housewives requesting it, following the end of the war.

Eight pounds of sugar went to all applicants who had been limited to the purchase of five pounds.