

LABORATORY
OF THE
INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT
OTTAWA, CANADA.

BULLETIN No. 226

Canned Corn.

OTTAWA, July 21, 1911.

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Deputy Minister of Inland Revenue.

SIR,—I have the honour to submit herewith a report upon 146 samples of Canned Corn purchased throughout the Dominion by our Inspectors, in the months of March, April and May of this year.

All the samples were found to be in an excellent condition of preservation.

It will be noted that except in the far West of Canada, this article is sold pretty generally at 10 cents per tin.

The collection embraces forty-six (46) different brands; but upon inquiry I find that this does not imply the same number of manufacturers. Many large dealers have special brands put up for themselves by the regular canners.

There is great uniformity in the weight as well as in the character of the contents of the cans, which naturally leads to the inference that the work of preparing canned corn is carefully and systematically conducted.

No guarantee or statement of weight appears on the labels of any of these samples. The actual weight of the contents varies from about 20 to about 22 ounces; and averages practically 21 ounces or 1 lb. 5 oz.

The chief points to be noted in this report are the frequent presence of acid sulphite of lime, doubtless added for bleaching effect; and the use of a non-sugar sweetener (usually saccharin) in many samples.

Decided amounts of acid sulphite have been found in 46 samples, and traces in 27 others; so that this bleaching material has certainly been employed in 73 samples, or 50 per cent of the entire number inspected.

The question of the use of sulphurous acid (the acid present in sulphites) in foods is a very important one. Some information regarding the matter will be found in Bulletin 126, pp. 24-26, published in 1906. In the intervening five years, a great deal of investigation has been carried on; and a good deal of legislation has resulted. Much of this has been proved to be hasty, in the sense of having been undertaken without full knowledge of the matters treated, and has had to be amended or has remained inoperative. (See F.I.D. No. 89, U.S. Department of Agriculture.)

That sulphurous acid is a poison, is perfectly well ascertained; but that it acts deleteriously on the human system in the minute quantity present in corn, has not been demonstrated. Much of the sulphite introduced as a bleaching agent is oxidized to sulphate, and thus rendered harmless. Free sulphurous acid is further got rid of in the

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