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## Leprosy aid found

After 28 years of research, a Canadian doctor has developed cultured bacilli similar to leprosy.

Dr. Laszlo Kato, a consultant on leprosy for the World Health Organization in Geneva, says the development is a major step towards finding a cure for the disfiguring disease.

Dr. Kato, who moved into a small lab at the Catherine Booth Hospital in Montreal last year after retiring from the Institute Armand Frappier at the University of Quebec, is reluctant to call the bacilli leprosy since they were developed in a test tube and not in the field.

But he said they have most of the properties of leprosy bacilli and react to the same drugs.

World Health Organization statistics show that there are about 15 million lepers in the world, most of them in Africa, India and South America. Canada is home to about 100 lepers.

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## Bringing in the bees

Bees are not known as migrators, but every spring large numbers cross the Canadian border heading north.

Beekeepers across Canada have to import both worker and queen bees in the spring to replace those that have died over the winter.

Most bees are shipped in special containers by truck from the southern United States. A more recent development is to ship bees to Canada by airplane to cut losses caused by travel time. Queen bees from New Zealand, the only other country allowed to export bees to Canada, are also flown in.

At border points and airports, bees are inspected to ensure no diseases or pests come in with the shipments. Inspectors in the United States also examine the bees before they are packaged for shipment.

The federal agriculture department sets a number of restrictions on bees imported into this country.

"Bees cannot be shipped on combs, and honey cannot be used to feed them in transit. They should be fed with a sugar syrup," said W.J. McElheran of Agriculture Canada's animal health directorate.

In addition, no used hives and hive equipment are allowed into Canada from

other countries. Combs, honey and equipment are all potential carriers of disease.

"The worst diseases are American foulbrood and European foulbrood. Both are caused by bacteria that attack young bee larvae," Dr. McElheran said.

"This year, we will also be keeping a close eye on bee imports from the U.S. because of the recent finding of several Varroa mites there," he said.

The mite, which attacks and sucks the juices from adult bees, is a major scourge of bee hives in some parts of the world. Two kinds of bees are imported into Canada, honeybees and leafcutter bees. Leafcutter bees, imported only from the U.S., are used in western Canada for pollination of alfalfa crops.

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## Calf vaccine a breakthrough

Scientists in Saskatchewan have developed a vaccine for newborn calves which is expected to cut cattle losses in Canada by millions of dollars annually.

The vaccine, marketed under the name Vicogen, combats a bacterial infection called a calf scour which strikes many newborn calves during the first five days of life. The infection causes diarrhea and dehydrates the young calves, killing about 3 to 5 per cent of those born each year.

Paul Hodgman, executive officer of the Veterinary Infectious Disease Organization, a research group at the University of Saskatchewan that developed the vaccine, said that it was developed during ten years of research at a cost of \$1.5 million.

Mr. Hodgman said his organization's studies show that the vaccine, which costs farmers about \$5 a cow, will save the industry more than \$70 million annually. It combats only bacterial scours, and not viral and other scours which are not usually fatal.

The discovery, considered to be the first of its kind in the world, came on the market in time for this calving season and has been injected into about 500,000 pregnant cows, about 10 per cent of all those (pregnant cows) in Canada.

Preliminary results from Ontario and western Canada show the vaccine is effective, but it is too early for exhaustive results. The vaccine is injected into a pregnant cow in two doses, six weeks and three weeks before delivery. The antibodies resulting from the vaccination are passed to the newborn calf within six hours of birth through the first milk, or colostrum.

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## Jeans altered instantly

When fashion designer Linda Lundstrom could not find a pair of blue jeans to fit her properly, she designed a pair that could be altered instantly.

Using a stretch denim imported from Japan, Lundstrom has come up with jeans to fit women's hip and waist sizes — all the buyer needs are a few minutes and a pair of scissors.

In addition to the final seam, there are three rows of removable stitches in the back of the pant. As each row is removed, the wearer gets an extra inch at the waist.

"If a woman has large hips and a small waist, she'll buy to fit her hip measurement and wear the jeans as is," Lundstrom says. "If she has another figure type, she'll also buy to fit her hip measurement and then have three choices of waist sizes with that pair of jeans."

The idea is revolutionary: Lundstrom has a patent pending on her sleek, straight-legged jeans, and the response to them since they hit the market in mid-January "has been overwhelming".

Five thousand pairs have been purchased by women across Canada and the designer says "We're having enough of a time just keeping up with the demand."

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## New union formed

Canada's two most important chemical, oil and atomic workers' unions have merged to form the new Energy and Chemical Workers Union (ECWU).

The ECWU is the result of the merger of the 20,000 Canadian members of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union (OCAW) based in Denver, Colorado, the 8,000 members of the independent Canadian Chemical Workers Union (CCW), and some 1,500 textile workers currently affiliated with the Quebec Federation of Labour.

The Canadian district of OCAW was granted autonomy from its American-based parent union at an international convention of the 180,000-member union last August. The ECWU, however, will maintain "an organizational interrelationship" with OCAW in the United States, including sharing an international pension fund. ECWU will also maintain the OCAW affiliation to the Canadian Labour Congress. The CCW broke from its American-based parent in 1975.