

DES has been used in cattle and sheep feed nearly 20 years without a single known instance of human harm.

The Canadian Minister of Agriculture, Mr. H.A. Olson, stated that his Department was reviewing the situation. "We will take all necessary steps to safeguard the health of the Canadian public. At the same time, we will ensure that our products for export meet the requirements of our trading partners," the Minister said.

On three occasions the Health Protection Branch of the Food and Drug Directorate had convened a committee of non-governmental medical specialists to advise on the human health implications of the use of DES, and a final report was expected soon, said Mr. Olson.

"We will be taking a close look at the findings of this report," he continued, "and any action we may take in this situation will be to ensure above all that the Canadian public has wholesome food."

GIFT TO POSTAL MUSEUM

The Canada Post Office has received from Mr. Robert D. Johnson of Town of Mount Royal, Quebec, a substantial contribution towards its National Postal Museum, which is scheduled to open its doors by April 1974.

The gift consists of an extensive collection of Canadian mint and used stamps, with an estimated value of several thousand dollars. Mr. Johnson, who is in the book business in Montreal, expressed the desire to help the National Postal Museum after he learned of the Post Office's plans to establish it, as announced by Postmaster General Jean-Pierre Côté last autumn.

Although the Museum is still very much in the developing stage, many donations have already been received, including one from Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa, who donated several early documents from various post offices in that province. Other donations include: a specialized collection based on the 1958 Canadian 5-cent stamp issued to honour the Canadian press; the Canadian portion of the comprehensive philatelic library of the late Mr. J.R. Cooke of Thamesford, Ontario, consisting of well over 1,100 items, many of which are quite scarce and long out of print; an early Argentine collection, including specimens of early stamps and postal stationery; an exceptionally fine copy of the Queen Anne Act of 1710, the first official reference to a postal system for the British colonies; a hand-cancelling machine used in the post office in Marmora, Ontario, from 1920 to 1968; three extremely valuable books recording early Canadian Post Office history (*Canada - Report on the Post Office 1832-40*, *Report into the State of the Canadian Post Office 1840-1*, *Prince Edward Island: Post Office Laws and Regulations (1859)*); and a number of important historical documents, donated by the British General Post Office.

WAR ON THE MOSQUITO

A new chemical synthesized at the Agriculture Canada Research Institute in London, Ontario may help control the mosquitoes that are spreading western encephalitis or sleeping sickness in North America.

The compound is a copy of a chemical "attractant" called a "pheromone", which is produced by the mosquito itself. "Apparently the eggs are coated with this attractant as they are laid," said Dr. A.N. Starratt, an organic chemist at the Research Institute.

Scientists, who began looking for the pheromone because they knew that mosquitoes preferred to lay their eggs where eggs had already been laid, synthesized an active component that attracted mosquitoes in the same way as the natural pheromone.

The female mosquito seeks water containing the pheromone in which to lay her eggs. When Dr. C.E. Osgood, an entomologist with the Department of Agriculture Canada Belleville, Ontario, Research Institute, he found that the pheromone spread as a film on water, lowering its surface tension. When the pheromone was present in higher than natural concentrations, the water no longer supported the mosquitoes and they drowned while attempting to lay their eggs.

Dr. Osgood and Dr. J.J.R. McLintock of the Saskatoon, Saskatchewan Research Station will conduct field tests near Weyburn, Saskatchewan, where breeding-pools could be treated with high enough concentrations of the pheromone to attract female mosquitoes and drown them as they attempt to land. Another possibility is to attract them to pools which will dry up before the larvae can develop.

Considerable interest is expected in the field trials with this first insect-produced laying attractant since, if it shows promise, it could lead to a safe, effective and economical control program.



Assistant Deputy Postmaster General A.C. Boughner (left), looks at stamps held by J.E. Kraemer, Manager of the National Postal Museum, Mr. M. Lysack, Director of Accounting (centre), looks on, while Mr. Robert D. Johnson, the donor, of Montreal is on the right.