

Cell, Mr. Roach's team from California Institute of Technology and two others from the University of California have already detected defects in this gene in a strain of mice.

"It's very exciting," said Mr. Roach, "it's the first time a neurological defect in a mammal has been traced back to a problem in the DNA (the molecule containing hundreds of thousands of genes which program each cell in the body)."

Though many diseases are suspected to be caused by genetic defects, the work done by Mr. Roach's team marks the first time defects in a gene causing a neurological disorder in a mammal have been detected by isolating the gene and studying it with X-ray film.

### New foods to tickle the taste buds

Dinner party for eight? Why not boil a few bags of Swedish meatballs, open a can of soybeans in Hawaiian sauce and serve with an oats casserole and add some aseptic wine and lingonberry jubilee for dessert.

It's quick, easy and most of the menu is pre-packaged with a shelf life up to two years. These and many other new foods and dishes were introduced recently at Agriculture Canada's "Foods of Future" reception.

The aim of the reception was to convince consumers and manufacturers to try new foods and packages that researchers hope to market here and abroad.

"Canadian technology can make these foods more valuable by processing and that will increase our domestic and export markets," said Agriculture Canada home economist Michelle Marcotte.

Guests moved around the long buffet tables to sample the kirsch and almond processed cheese, mini-chicken wieners, apple chips, popped oats and carob-covered soybeans.

The beverages included frozen raspberry juice from British Columbia, cream, milk, wine, yogurt and fruit drinks packed in long-life brick-like containers.

Entrées such as chili, beef stew and cabbage rolls were packed in retort pouches, the new boil-in-the-foil bags the Canadian team dined on when they conquered Mount Everest in 1982.

Most of the new foods are already on the grocery shelves but some are still in the development stage at Agriculture Canada's research stations.

Hull-less oats, called cavena, were developed by Dr. Vern Burrows, who hopes

to make oats a cheap side dish that will replace the \$50-million worth of rice imported into Canada.

Agriculture Canada is also applying for a patent on a new method of making ricotta cheese from whey and milk. This would get rid of the country's whey surplus, solving disposal problems.

The desserts — Saskatoon berry pie and ligonberry jubilee — were the biggest hits, but scientists are still trying to cultivate the wild berries for commercial production.

### Weekly bulletins report on levels of acid rain

Environment Minister Charles Caccia has announced that Environment Canada will distribute reports on the acidity of rain and snow to the wire services at approximately 2 p.m. every Tuesday.

The acid rain bulletins will summarize the acidity of the precipitation that fell at five locations in eastern Canada during the preceding seven days and describe the movements of the weather systems that produced the rain or snow.

Four of these sites are part of Environment Canada's air and precipitation monitoring network located at Longwoods and Chalk River in Ontario, Forêt Montmorency, near Quebec City and Kejimikujik National Park in Nova Scotia.

Environment Canada's acid rain reports will also include data collected and provided by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment from their Acid Rain

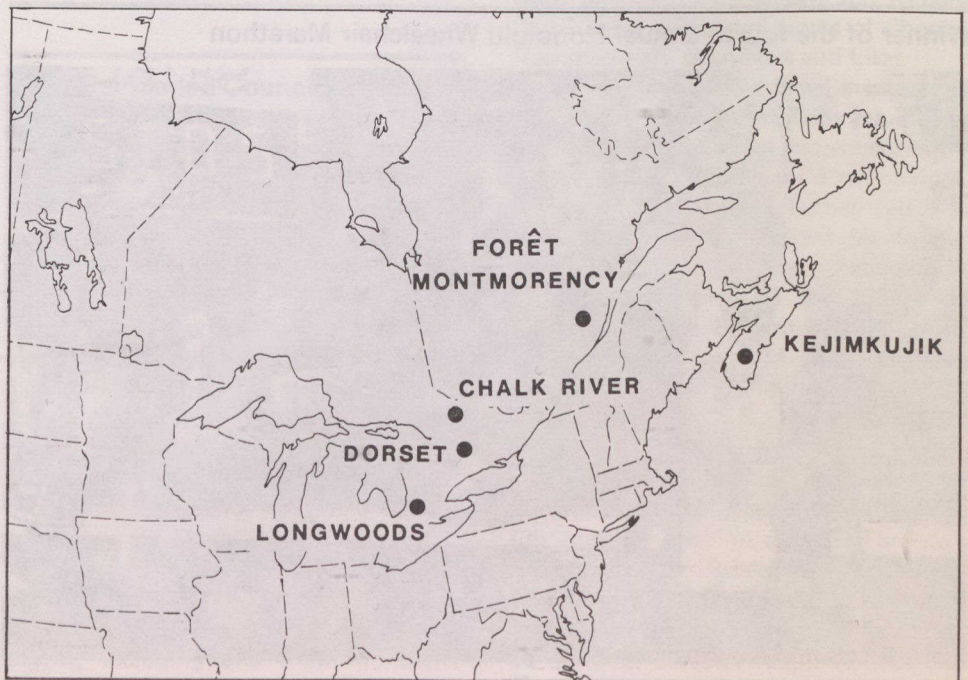
Saskatoon berries grow in woods, bogs and near streams in every province but are most plentiful on the prairies. They are plump, juicy berries that look and taste like blueberries. Ligonberries are low-bush cranberries found in the Maritimes. They are too tart and acidic to be eaten raw but are ideal for jellies, sauces, pies and tarts.

The slick new compact packages can last for months in the cupboard and replace the cans, glass jars and cartons that clutter up refrigerators.

Research Centre at Dorset, Ontario in the Muskoka region.

Mr. Caccia said that Environment Canada was providing this information to increase public awareness and understanding of the pervasiveness of the growing acid rain problem, which he described as the most important environmental issue facing North America today. A similar program of pH reporting in the state of Maine has proved effective in drawing attention to the issue in the eastern United States.

"These weekly reports," Mr. Caccia said, "will demonstrate that rain or snow generated by weather systems that have passed over the areas of eastern North America where there are high emissions of sulphur dioxide are consistently more acidic than precipitation from systems passing over other areas."



Map shows collection sites for Environment Canada's acid rain report.