

# Supermarkets go west for beef

By CAROLYN PRICE  
and MAURIE WALKER

If all the controversy about PBB-infected Michigan meat and dairy products has gotten you worried enough to turn vegetarian, the area's major supermarket chains say you can put your fears to rest.

Allied Foods, which owns Great Scott and Wrigley's supermarkets, held a press conference last week to assure their shoppers that the beef they buy comes from the western states and is untainted by the fire retardant chemical, which was accidentally mixed with livestock feed in Michigan in 1973.

A survey of the beef-purchasing policy of other major metropolitan chains got much the same response. The spokesmen interviewed said their firms buy only non-Michigan beef and have done so for years.

The reason, most chain representatives said, is more economic than hygienic. Western beef is cheaper than Michigan beef because more of it is produced.

The spokesmen acknowledged, however, that they have no way of knowing what goes into all processed meat, such as hot dogs and bologna. Farmer Jack stores, according to spokesman Dan Carpenter, gets its beef exclusively from Iowa and the Midwest, and advertised that fact last year.

Chris Beseler said Kroger procures beef in Cincinnati and maintains its own feeder lots in Kansas and Iowa.

## Mothers reimbursed for PBB milk test

By CRAIG PIECHURA

Providing a doctor recommends the test, expectant mothers can be reimbursed for the \$25 fee charged to analyze breast milk samples for traces of PBB.

Michigan Blue Cross-Blue Shield had announced it would not cover the service for subscribers, but if a woman is indigent or persistent she can be reimbursed for the cost of the test.

Before a woman goes to the county health department to pick up a self-administered testing container, she must have her doctor's permission or prescription.

"In some cases, the doctor has picked up the state testing kits from the county health office and this is perfectly all right," explained Dr. Harold Humphrey, environmental epidemiologist in the Michigan Department of Health.

The kit consists of a styrofoam mailing box that is already addressed to the Environmental Research Group laboratory in Ann Arbor, which conducts PBB testing for the State of Michigan.

The kit contains explanations on how to collect and store the breast milk sample. Inside the testing kit is a self-addressed form that goes to the

All the beef for Ctham stores comes from Colorado, Iowa and other midwest states, according to spokesman William Roberts. He added that pork also comes from the midwestern suppliers.

Duane Oster of the A & P supermarket chain said the largest share of beef sold in the stores come from Greeley, Colorado, with some being supplied from Kansas and Iowa.

Allied Foods had the most to say about the PBB (poly-brominated biphenyl) problem and the ways the chain was attempting to protect consumers.

Since the chemical got into the feed of Michigan cattle more than three years ago, many animals have developed illnesses and died or have been destroyed.

Health problems have also afflicted Michigan farm families whose bodies have been found to contain high levels of PBB.

Some farmers have complained that state agriculture department regulations on the tolerable level of PBB in Michigan beef are too lax, allowing dangerously contaminated beef to reach consumers. State officials have denied this charge.

Side effects of the chemical may not be detected in human beings for 20 years, according to some scientists.

"We want to put consumers at ease, to reassure them that meat and dairy products sold at Great Scott, and that includes the former Wrigley markets, contain no traces of PBB," said Earl Smith, Allied Foods board chairman.

"Since the disease came to our at-

tention in June of 1974, we have purchased all our beef in the western part of the country.

"The beef is raised and fed in such states as Colorado and Kansas, shipped in refrigerated tractor trucks to our warehouse in Livonia," he added.

"Our specifications and policies call for all fresh beef purchased by our company from meat packers to be filled from cattle raised and fed outside Michigan. This includes beef for grinding," said Joe Harber, general manager for the Great Scott chain.

Smith said that prior to the PBB problem being brought to light in 1974, Allied had purchased some Michigan beef, mainly for grinding.

"Actually, most of the Michigan cattle are for milk rather than meat. The type we need for steaks and roasts was always purchased out west."

Harber said that since the start of the PBB controversy Allied Foods have asked the Michigan Department of Agriculture to inspect the firm's dairy products for PBB more than a dozen times.

Harber quoted from a letter by Kenneth Van Patten, chief of the dairy di-

vision of the Michigan Department of Agriculture, last September to Ernst Bachmann, Allied's quality control manager, that "In each case the laboratory reports non-detectable results in samples of Allied (dairy) products."

"Actually, we have only detected PBB in the milk supply of two small plants in Michigan since June 1974, and the levels in both samples were below the guideline tolerance," Van Patten wrote.

"The consumers in Michigan are receiving dairy products free of PBB," Van Patten's letter read.

In addition to Great Scott and Wrigley markets, Allied supplies the Abner Wolff wholesalers who sell to 91 independent stores throughout the area. Not all of this is meat but does include dairy products.

Harber also referred to a recent letter from Alan L. Hoeting, district director of the Michigan Department of Health, Education and Welfare, public health service, which said that there have been very few violations of PBB limits in marketed meat during the past two years.

Monday, February 28, 1977

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## Festival group starts

(Continued from page 1A)

committee will judge the entries; their decision is final. The committee will not be liable for any damages arising out of the themes or slogans submitted and reserves the right to cancel the contest because of inappropriate or insufficient entries.

"We hope to stimulate community interest in this year's festival and to find a fresh and vigorous idea about the Farmington area embodied in a brief slogan which can be used as this year's festival theme," says Pat Fallon, last year's general chairman who serves as board chairman this year.

Other members of the Founders Festival Executive Committee include Terry Sever, first vice chairman; Coss Connolly, second vice-chairman; Leon Serdyński, treasurer; Karen Stewart, finance chairman; Cindy Wile, executive secretary; Dan Greenberg, publicity chairman; Bob Devyack and Pete Prokop, advisors; and Ed Lane, administrator.

The festival activities committee chairmen include: Bev Ellis, children's art-in; Barb Hay, Sunday-In-The-Park; Jean Iles, craft tent; Terry

Lane, special equipment; Gary and Susan Miramonti, parade-co-chairmen; Deborah Muehly, stage and transportation; and Patrick Short, bike celebration.

John Hay is the festival's official photographer.

## Midget icers win District

Farmington Ellis Realty, a Midget A travel hockey team with a district championship to its credit, has earned a place in the Midget state tournament March 11-13 in Port Huron.

Coach Pat MacDonald's Farmington team advanced to the state journey by beating Garden City, 3-2, last Wednesday in the District 5 championship game at Livonia's Ford Ice Arena. Farmington's Bob Luzynski scored two goals, while teammates Bruce Hulscher, Perry Vellucci and Mike Muzzini each had one. Barry White was Farmington's goaltender.

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