

A
Guide
to Historical Holdings
in the
Eisenhower Library

CRANBERRY SCARE OF 1959

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MATERIALS IN THE EISENHOWER LIBRARY HOLDINGS RELATING TO THE 1959 CRANBERRY SCARE

Introduction

On November 9, 1959, the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW), Arthur S. Flemming, made the following announcement:

The Food and Drug Administration today urged that no further sales be made of cranberries and cranberry products produced in Washington and Oregon in 1958 and 1959 because of their possible contamination by a chemical weed killer, aminotriazole, which causes cancer in the thyroids of rats when it is contained in their diet, until the cranberry industry has submitted a workable plan to separate the contaminated berries from those that are not contaminated.

The announcement caused a great furor throughout the U. S. that resulted in the removal of cranberry products from the shelves of grocery stores, menus of restaurants and the Thanksgiving tables of American families.

The Dwight D. Eisenhower Library has a considerable amount of documentation on this one particular environmental issue that arose during the 1950s. This guide lists and briefly describes materials found in the Library's holdings pertaining to the cranberry crisis.

- A. Jack Z. Anderson: Special Assistant to the Secretary of Agriculture, 1955-56; Administrative Assistant to the President, 1956-61: Records, 1956-61
- Box 1, Folder: Agriculture [USDA Secretary Benson's statements on chemicals and foods, 1/14/60]
- B. Dwight D. Eisenhower: Papers as President of the United States, 1953-61 (Ann Whitman File)
1. Administration Series.
- Box 23, Folder: Kistiakowsky, Dr. G. B. (1) [Report of the panel on food additives; comments by Secretary of HEW and U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)]
2. Cabinet Series.
- Box 15. Folder: Cabinet Meeting of January 22, 1960 (1) [meeting minutes re chemicals and food; cabinet paper cp-60-105 on Chemicals and Food, 1/20/60]
- C. Dwight D. Eisenhower: Records as President of the United States, 1953-61 (White House Central Files)
1. General File.
- Box 446, Folder: GF 80-A VA Administrator (3) [correspondence, George C. P. Olsson, Ocean Spray and Sumner Whittier, Veterans Administration; cranberry recipes used at VA hospitals]
- Box 1148, Folder: GF 142-G-12 FOOD 1959-1960 (1) [correspondence, George C. P. Olsson, Ocean Spray and Sumner Whittier, Veterans Administration; cranberry recipes used at VA hospitals]
- Box 1148, Folder: GF 142-G-12 FOOD 1959-1960 (1) [articles from Chemical & Engineering News (“ White House Steps into Food Additives Melee”) and FEEDSTUFFS (“The Impact of FDA Regulations on Research and Living Standards” by Dr. Earl L. Butz)]
- Box 1149, Folder: GF 142-G-12 CRANBERRIES [correspondence from the general public, congressmen, chemical industry and cranberry growers]
2. Official File.
- Box 463, Folders: OF 110-N-11 CRANBERRIES (1)-(5) [correspondence of White House staff, congressmen, Ezra Taft Benson; 12/8/59 statement by Arthur Flemming; the use of diethylstilbestrol in poultry; 11/9/59 statement by Flemming; background information on aminotriazole; correspondence from HEW and FDA, Extension Office of the University of Massachusetts; the proposed cranberry recovery program]
- D. Arthur S. Flemming, Member, U. S. Civil Service Commission, 1939-48; First and Second Hoover Commissions, 1948-49 and 1953-55; President's Advisory Committee on Government Organization, 1953-61; Director, Office of Defense Mobilization, 1953-58; Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, 1958-61; President, Ohio Wesleyan University, 1948-53; University of Oregon, 1961-68: Papers, 1939-75

Box 5, Folders: Cranberry Case (E.A. Bock) (1)-(5) [correspondence of Flemming and Edwin Bock, The Inter-University Case Program in New York; draft of The Great Cranberry Crisis of 1959 by Eugene Feingold; Flemming correspondence with a Master's Degree candidate, Jarold Kieffer letter on the crisis]

- E. Bryce N. Harlow; Special Assistant to President, 1953; Administrative Assistant to the President, 1953; Administrative Assistant to the President, 1953-58; Deputy Assistant to the President for Congressional Affairs, 1958-61: Records, 1953-61

Box 9, Folder: Cranberries [memoranda and correspondence from HEW, Sin. Saltonstall, FDA, 3/3/60 press release]

- F. Jarold A. Kieffer, Assistant in the Office of Defense Mobilization, 1951-58; Assistant, Atomic Energy Commission, 1952-53; Assistant, President's Advisory Committee on Government Organization, 1953-61; Assistant, Hoover Commission, 1958-58; Consultant, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1958-61: Papers, 1953-61 (microfilm)

Reel # 9, Folder: Food and Drug JK Personal (0220-0240) [duplicate materials found in other collections]

- G. Robert E. Merriam, Deputy Assistant to the President for Interdepartmental Affairs, 1958-61; Member, Joint Federal-State Action Committee, 1959-61; Member, Ad Hoc Interagency Committee on Metropolitan Area Problems, 1959-61: Records, 1955-61

Box 5, Folder: Food Additives [May 14, 1960 press release and May 9, 1960 "Report of the Panel on Food Additives," comments on report by Flemming and Benson; correspondence from Ocean Spray Cranberries, Inc.; article entitled "Farm Fallout Can Kill You!"]

- H. Gerald D. Morgan, Special Assistant in the White House, 1953; Administrative Assistant to the President, 1953-55; Special Counsel to the President, 1955-58; Deputy Assistant to the President, 1958-61: Records, 1953-61

Box 7, Folder: Cranberry Situation - 1959 [correspondence from Hastings Keith, Secretary Benson, Veterans Administration, U. S. Army Quartermaster General, Bureau of the Budget]

- I. Don Paarlberg, Economic Advisor to the Secretary of Agriculture, 1953-57; Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, 1953-57; Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, 1957-58; Special Assistant to the President and Food-for-Peace Coordinator, 1958-61: Records, 1954-61

Box 5, Folders: Food Contamination (1)-(4) [12/8/59 Report, "Special Subcommittee on Legislative Oversight of the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce - The Cranberry Problem..."; 11/9/59 statement by Flemming, White House staff correspondence; Public Law 85-929, Report to House Committee by Flemming; Statement to House Committee by Flemming; 1/26/60 statement by Flemming on progress of clearing safe food additives; 5/9/60 memorandum on Kistiakowsky's meeting with the President; 3/30/60 White House press release on indemnity payments; memoranda on proposed cranberry program]

- J. Wilton B. Persons: Deputy Assistant to the President, 1953-58; Assistant to the President, 1958-61: records, 1953-61

Box 1, folder: HEW File [2/11/60 White House statement on agency reports to President; 12/8/59 statement by Flemming on establishment of scientific task force; 1/26/60 statement by Flemming before the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce; 12/10/59 statement on stilbestrol in meat

Box 2, [card file] [3x5 index cards listing White House "Cranberry Meetings"]

K. Republican National Committee: News clippings and publications, 1932-65

Box 309, Folder: [Government] H. E. W. [Health, Education and Welfare] - Cranberries [1960] [newspaper articles/clippings from Washington Daily News, Chicago Daily Tribune, Washington Post-Herald, New York Times, Washington Star, Washington News, Philadelphia Inquirer, New York Herald-Tribune, Baltimore Sun, Des Moines Register, Providence Journal, San Francisco Chronicle, dated November 12, 1959-May 5, 1960]

L. Fred A. Seaton, U. S. Senator, Nebraska, 1951; member, personal advisory staff to Dwight D. Eisenhower during 1952 campaign; Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs, 1952-55; Administrative Assistant to the President, February, 1955; Deputy Assistant to the President, June, 1955; Secretary of the Interior, 1956-61: Papers, 1900-72

Subject Series

Box 11, Folder: Fish and Wildlife Services (1) [no items specifically on the cranberry issue, but information on effects of pesticides on the environment.]

M. U. S. President's Science Advisory Committee: Records, 1957-61

Box 3, Folder: Chemical Panel [correspondence from Dr. James G. Horsfall of the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station; memorandum of views of Dr. George F. Sprague of the Agricultural Research Service]

N. WHITE HOUSE OFFICE, Cabinet Secretariat: Records, 1953-60

Box 1, Folder: Chemicals and Food [12/10/59 statement by Flemming on Delaney Clause; 3/31/60 letter, Benson to Flemming; Cabinet Paper CP-60-105 plus draft copy; Benson's statements on chemicals and foods, 1/14/60; documentation concerning communication between USDA and HEW]

O. WHITE HOUSE OFFICE, Office of the Special Assistant for Science and Technology (James R. Killian and George B. Kistiakowsky), 1957-61

Box 4, Folder: Agriculture

Box 12, Folders: Life Sciences (1)-(3) [Kistiakowsky correspondence on food additives and the Chemicals Panel; USDA memo on House hearings on chemicals in food; literature list of Chemicals Panel; "Issues Confronting the 'Chemicals' Panel"; other memoranda and correspondence on report of Chemicals Panel]

Box 20, Folder: Food Additives and Chemicals Panel, Public Mail Letters [correspondence from the National Canners Association, Food Processing magazine, and the Manufacturing Chemists' Association to Kistiakowsky relaying advice on food additives and report of Chemicals Panel; also small amount of other public mail]

- P. WHITE HOUSE OFFICE, Office of the Staff Secretary: Records of Paul T. Carroll, Andrew J. Goodpaster, L. Arthur Minnich, and Christopher H. Russell, 1952-61
1. Cabinet Series.

Box 6, Folder: C-53 (1) January 6 and 22, 1960 [handwritten notes on January 22nd Cabinet meeting with candid comments by President Eisenhower, Flemming, et al]
 2. Subject Series, Alphabetical Subseries.

Box 16, Folder: Dr. Kistiakowsky (3) [Kistiakowsky memo to President, 5/9/60]
- Q. WHITE HOUSE OFFICE: Records Officer Reports to President on pending legislation, 1953-61
- Box 144, Folder: Appr. 9/6/58 To protect the public health by amending the Federal FOOD, DRUG, and COSMETIC Act to prohibit the use in food of additives which have not been adequately tested to establish their safety. H.R. 13254. [correspondence and background information from various agencies on H. R. 13254; copies of the Food Additives Amendment of 1958 and H. R. 13254]
- R. WHITE HOUSE OFFICE, Staff Research Group (Albert P. Toner and Christopher H. Russell): Records, 1956-61
- Box 10, folder: Health, Education and Welfare 661-700 [HEW memoranda on the status of the cranberry investigations, 12/22/59 HEW press release on testing]
- S. Oral History Interview (OH-504) Arthur S. Flemming, Director, Office of Defense Mobilization, 1953-57; Secretary of Health Education and Welfare, 1958-61
- [Dr. Flemming discusses the Delaney Clause, directions for use of week-killer, decision to make announcement, testing, Rachel Carson, Dr. Kistiakowsky and the chemical panel]
- T. Oral History Interview (OH-412), George Kistiakowsky, Member 1957-63, and Chairman, 1959-61, of the President's Science Advisory Committee; Special Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, 1959-61
- [Dr. Kistiakowsky discusses briefly President Eisenhower being caught in the middle, between USDA and HEW; enlisting Kistiakowsky's help]

There are very few secondary sources on the cranberry crisis of 1959 located in the Eisenhower Library. The book collection does contain a copy of Silent Spring, by Rachel Carson (Cambridge, Mass.: The Riverside Press, 1962); A Scientist at the White House: The Private Diary of President Eisenhower's Special Assistant for Science and Technology, by George B. Kistiakowsky, (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. and London, England, 1976); issues of Life, The New Republic, Newsweek, Time, U. S. News and World Report magazines; and The New York Times and Washington Post newspapers on microfilm