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Division of Biology and Medicine

February 12, 1959

Gordon M. Dunning, Chief, Radiation Effects of Weapons Branch
Division of Biology and Medicine

DATA FOR MINNESOTA

SYMBOL: BRREV:GND

Per our discussions, I have reviewed the HASL data on the strontium content of the wheat samples from Minnesota and the correspondence from Dr. Richard Caldecott, Institute of Agriculture, University of Minnesota, to Dr. Max Zelle.

You will recall we met with Governor Freeman of Minnesota and his Attorney General, together with our General Manager on February 24, 1958 to discuss fallout in Minnesota. Following this Dr. John Harley and I met with Task Group 4 (a Committee appointed by Governor Freeman) dealing with "Uncontrollable or Background Radiation in Minnesota." In an effort to avoid a direct reply to their request for the AEC to finance a laboratory for their use, it was decided to offer to have HASL analyze some of their samples. During and following these events not all the problems were scientific in nature.

In light of the present events, and in the belief that our problems are not ended in Minnesota, I would suggest the following:

1. There should be a definite assignment of responsibility to follow up on all of the factors that bear on the collection and analyses of the wheat samples. Since it is not advisable to accept blindly whatever materials are sent us and then publicly report the results without the necessary back-up information, some of the additional samples offered us should be accepted, providing relevant data accompany them.
2. The highest strontium units found in the wheat samples (610 and 602 strontium units) were greater than the others, not because of a larger strontium-90 content but because of a lesser amount of calcium. As you know, the subject of calcium content in foods was discussed in relation to the Rongelap data. You may wish to ask Hal Hollister to put further thoughts to the calcium analysis problem.

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3. It is my understanding that the AEC has sponsored scientific symposia in the past. If the Minnesota Atomic Development Advisory Committee comes forth with specific evidence of organizing and conducting a scientific symposium then there would seem to be a precedent for our supporting it in whole or in part. Based solely on scientific considerations, one might raise the question about Minnesota being the most appropriate place to conduct the symposia.

cc: Dr. Shilling
Dr. Western
Dr. Zelle
Dr. Wolfe
Dr. Reitemier

DOE ARCHIVES

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SAMPLES OF WHEAT SENT BY DR. MAURICE B. VISSCHER
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA MEDICAL SCHOOL

Results of Sr90 Analyses

Minnesota Wheat

Re: Letter of July 16, 1958 from Dr. Vissscher to Dr. Harley

NASL #	Ref #	% ash of wt. rec'd	d/m Sr90 per g. ash	% Ca in ash	H		I mc Sr90 per g. ash
					µp	K. Ca	
8334	1	1.93	8.83 ± 0.35	2.44	163	± 7	77
8335	2*	2.07	7.06 ± 0.34	2.02	157	± 7	67
8895			8.20 ± 0.47	2.04	181	± 10	77
8336	3	2.21	3.66 ± 0.28	1.87	88.2	± 7.0	37
8337	4	2.00	3.09 ± 0.27	1.70	81.8	± 7.1	27
8338	5	2.27	3.74 ± 0.28	2.04	82.4	± 6.4	32
8339	6*	1.55	2.33 ± 0.33	1.47	71.4	± 10.2	16
8894			2.42 ± 0.29	1.42	76.8	± 9.2	17
8340	7	2.07	4.91 ± 0.38	2.36	93.6	± 7.2	42
8341	8	1.91	5.43 ± 0.29	1.98	124	± 7	47
8342	9	2.26	6.36 ± 0.42	1.91	150	± 10	55
8343	10*	2.21	8.11 ± 0.36	1.88	194	± 8	60
8893			7.85 ± 0.49	1.73	205	± 13	60
8344	11	2.06	6.54 ± 0.42	1.58	187	± 12	60
8345	12*	3.64	6.78 ± 0.42	0.50	610	± 38	72
8892			6.95 ± 0.33	0.52	602	± 29	72
8346	13	2.12	5.38 ± 0.31	1.66	146	± 8	77
8347	14	2.15	4.80 ± 0.37	2.06	105	± 8	77

* Run as blind duplicates

error term is one standard deviation due to counting

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Box 3213

Folder Fallout - Minnesota 57-5

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Re: Letter of November 4, 1958 from Dr. Visscher to Dr. Harley.

HASL #	Ref #	% ash of wt. resid	d/m Sr90 per g. ash	% Ca in ash	µg Sr90/g. ash	
8939	15*	1.84	4.28 ± 0.31	1.60	121 ± 9	36
8932			4.09 ± 0.28	1.82	101 ± 7	34
8940	16	1.77	7.52 ± 0.35	1.84	184 ± 9	60
8941	17	1.35	5.88 ± 0.32	2.13	124 ± 7	36
8942	18	1.70	6.99 ± 0.32	1.86	169 ± 8	54
8943	19	1.84	4.48 ± 0.29	1.06	191 ± 12	37
8944	20	2.05	5.78 ± 0.34	1.65	158 ± 9	53
8945	21	1.84	4.89 ± 0.32	1.70	129 ± 8	41
8946	22*	2.00	4.58 ± 0.29	0.97	212 ± 13	41
8933			4.84 ± 0.31	1.02	214 ± 14	43
8947	23*	1.98	4.59 ± 0.30	1.73	120 ± 8	41
9050			4.78 ± 0.31	1.76	122 ± 8	43

* Run as blind duplicates

error term is one standard deviation due to counting