

Food and Drugs Authorities.
Port Health Authorities.
For information:—
Public Analysts.

Circular MF 2/54
(England and Wales.)

MINISTRY OF FOOD,
GREAT WESTMINSTER HOUSE,
LONDON, S.W.1.

25th January, 1954.

SIR,

**The Public Health (Preservatives, etc., in Food) Regulations, 1925 to 1948.
Thiourea.**

1. I am directed by the Minister of Food to draw the attention of your Authority to the possible use by certain orange growers of thiourea, and of fungicides containing thiourea, as a rot and mould suppressant.

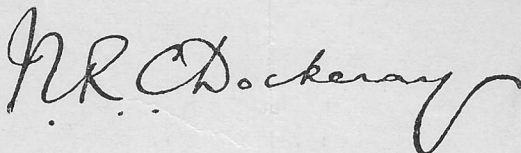
2. Thiourea can penetrate the skin of citrus fruits and find its way into the juice. Experiments in the United States have shown that this chemical is lethal to some animals in very low concentrations. Its use is accordingly open to strong objections on grounds of toxicity.

3. The Minister is advised, moreover, that thiourea falls within the definition of "Preservative" contained in the Preservatives in Food Regulations, and that the sale of any article of food containing thiourea would be a contravention of these Regulations, since no provision exists therein permitting its addition to food. For this reason it would not be appropriate to introduce legislation designed specifically to prohibit the importation and sale of citrus fruit so treated.

4. There is no conclusive evidence that citrus fruit treated with thiourea is being imported into the U.K. but the possibility cannot be excluded and the Minister is confident that appropriate action will be taken by your Authority in the event of infringement of the Regulations being revealed by analysis of samples of citrus fruit.

5. A copy of this circular is being sent to the Medical Officer of Health and a copy is enclosed for the Sampling Officer. Further copies may be obtained from Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,



Assistant Secretary.

The Clerk of the Council, or
The Town Clerk, or
The Clerk of the Port Health Authority.

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LONDON: HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

1954

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