Oil Sprays Do Not Hurt Chicken Feed

DAVIS, Yolo Co. — Petroleum base sprays, widely used in California to dry the foliage and seed of milo and other sorghum grains as an aid to harvesting, apparently have no detrimental effect on the grains as poultry feeds.

Research scientists of the poultry husbandry and food technology departments of the University of California at Davis have reached that conclusion after tests on both growth rates and meat flavor of chickens which have been fed herbicide treated feeds.

F. Howard Kratzer, an associate professor of poultry husbandry, estimates it would be necessary for 2 per cent of the spray used to remain on the grain before the feed would be detrimental. That figure is based upon airplane spraying of a milo field at 160 pounds of compound per acre with a yield of 1,600 pounds per acre.

"If the treated grain composed 50 per cent of the poultry ration," he adds, "there would be an 0.1 per cent of the herbicide in the ration. Loss of the herbicide from the grain on storage and during use would lower the level still further. Below that level, petroleum base herbicide in feed has no depressing effect on growth of chicks."

Flavor tests on fryers, directed by Elly Hinreiner of the department of food technology at Davis, showed no objectionable flavor in the meat of birds which had been fed herbicides at up to 0.2 per cent for 22 days.