

## EconEdLink: THE STRUGGLE FOR A FEDERAL PURE FOOD LAW

*(Answer Key)*

Give three reasons consumers were concerned about the nation's food safety and quality. (1-3)

- New "artificial" foods were being introduced as substitutes for natural foods. An 1886 debate in Congress pitting producers of oleomargarine (the substitute) against those who made butter raised public health concerns regarding these new "artificial foods."
- Another public health concern was manufacturer use of potentially toxic substances such as sulfur and borax to help preserve foods.
- Products labeled "pure" were often fake. "Pure Vermont Maple Syrup" was little more than colored and flavored Iowa corn syrup. Glucose was being sold as honey. A concoction of apple scraps, glucose, coal-tar dye, and timothy seeds was labeled strawberry jam.
- Shady processors found ways to hide spoiled food - they deodorized rotten eggs and revived rancid butter.
- Meat packers were blamed with shipping "embalmed beef" that sickened the troops during the Spanish-American War.
- Upton Sinclair published his 1906 novel, THE JUNGLE, exposing filthy conditions in Chicago's packing plants

Business and trade groups joined consumers in asking for federal regulation of food. Give two reasons businesses welcomed regulation. (4-5)

- Reputable businesses were concerned they would be put out of business by producers of fake and adulterated food which could be sold more cheaply.
- Businesses who wanted to sell food across state lines found it difficult to comply with different, sometimes contradicting state regulations
- American businessmen and farmers engaged in exporting food were already feeling the impact of an 1875 British law.

Harvey W. Wiley, a chemist and physician, was named chief chemist of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1883. Recognizing food adulteration threatened public health, Dr. Wiley became known as the "Crusading Chemist." Give three examples of how did Dr. Wiley lead the "pure food crusade"? (6-8)

- Garnered public attention to the issues by establishing a "poison squad" of young men to test what chemical preservatives were injurious to health and in what quantities.
- Wrote and made speeches promoting pure food.
- Organized allies and recruits into a coalition to spur Congress to act.
- Sought to work out compromise agreements in the private sector that might smooth passage of a law
- After passage of the law, worked out the procedures for enforcing the laws including inspection techniques and taking violators to court.

Define "adulterated" as used in the 1906 Pure Food and Drugs law. (9)

- The removal of valuable constituents, the substitution of ingredients so as to reduce quality, the addition of deleterious ingredients, and the use of spoiled animal and vegetable products.

What is meant by misbranding in the 1906 law? (10)

- Making false or misleading statements on a label.