

A SIMPLE AND EFFICIENT METHOD FOR PERMANENTLY NUMBERING RABBITS.*

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In the routine assay of Insulin a large number of rabbits are required. The assay is greatly facilitated by injecting two groups of nine rabbits, one with the standard Insulin and the other with the unknown. One week later the groups are reversed so that the one which received the standard now receives the unknown, and vice versa. In this manner variables in the susceptibility to Insulin of individual animals tend to balance each other.



The above procedure makes it desirable and almost necessary to number permanently each rabbit because after the necessary rest period the same animals may be used repeatedly as long as they weigh between 1800 and 2200 Gm. Various forms of tags, clips and rings have been used with more or less success, but often these produced injury to the ear, thereby interfering with the bleeding. Branding with a toothed punch caused infection at times. Numbers printed on with various dyes and pigments, such as methylene blue, fuchsin, safranin, picric acid, indigo carmine, indelible ink, India

ink, etc., although brilliant when applied, soon faded and became obliterated.

To overcome these difficulties, the following method has been devised and found very satisfactory: The hammer of a discarded electric bell is bent at right angles to the armature and a sewing needle is soldered to the bent portion. A toy transformer attached to the light circuit may be used as a suitable source of current, although any other 6-volt supply is equally efficient. The numbers are written on the inner surface of the ear with India ink and while the ink is still wet, the vibrating needle is run along the numbers, thus tattooing the pigment into the skin. This process is very rapid; a rabbit may be tattooed with a 3-digit number in about two minutes. The animal experiences little discomfort and no blood is drawn. The numbers put on by this method are permanent. No infections have been observed.

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