

**J. SCOTT CHRISTIANSON**

**Answers to quiz about population, resource use**



One hundred people responded to the "Non-trivial Earth Day Quiz" published March 25. Thanks to all who responded. Below are the answers, sources and information about the responses.

1. What is the current world population? (a) 5.5 million; (b) 3.5 billion; (c) 5.6 billion; (d) 1.5 billion. Sixty-four people knew that there are 5.6 billion people on the planet. Source: Population Reference Bureau.

2. What is the current population of the United States? (a) 259 million; (b) 123 million; (c) 550 million. Twenty-five people got the correct answer — (a) 259 million. Source: Population Reference Bureau.

3. At the current growth rate of 1.7 percent, how long will it take the current world population to double? (a) 100 years; (b) 42 years; (c) 500 years. Fifty-seven people answered 42 years, which is correct.

The answer for this question comes from the Population Reference Bureau, and is based on a simple calculation for estimating the doubling time of growing populations. Doubling time is figured by dividing 70 by the growth rate. So, 70

divided by 1.7 is 41.2 years — about 42 years.

4. What percentage of prescription drugs are derived from plants or animals in the rain forest? (a) 5 percent; (b) 75 percent; (c) 40 percent. According to the World Watch Institute, 40 percent of prescription drugs are derived from the rain forest; 47 people answered correctly.

5. How many of the world's children die each year from malnutrition and treatable diseases? (a) 4.5 million; (b) 8 million; (c) 13 million. UNICEF reported in its 1994 State of the World's Children report that 13 million children die from treatable diseases; 24 people answered this correctly.

6. If all of the estimated 800,000 U.S. lawyers switched to paper that was 50 percent recycled, how many trees and how much water would be saved each year? The World Watch Institute estimates that 5 million trees and 2 billion gallons of water would be saved.

7. Two million five hundred thousand people in the United States have the environmental impact of how many people in India? (a) 50

million; (b) 25 million; (c) 75 million; (d) 83 million. Forty-nine people answered (b) 25 million, but the correct answer was (d) 83 million; 18 people chose (d).

The environmental impact of a population is equal to its population times its consumption times the impact of its technology — sometimes written as  $I=PAT$ . We in the United States use an enormous amount of resources and energy per person and therefore have a much greater environmental impact than the same number of people in India.

8. During 1994, the U.S. government will spend \$392 million on international population assistance. How long does it take the Pentagon to spend this amount? (a) one hour; (b) one day; (c) one week; (d) one month. Answer: (b) one day. Source: U.S. Federal Budget.

9. At current rates, how long does it take to add 500 million people to the world population? (a) less than 500 years; (b) less than 60 years; (c) less than 10 years; (d) less than 6 years. Only 11 people knew that it will take less than 6 years to add 500 million people to the world population.

10. One acre of prime farmland can produce 20,000 pounds of apples, 40,000 pounds of potatoes or how many pounds of beef? (a) 250 pounds; (b) 1,000 pounds; (c) 500 pounds; (d) 10,000 pounds. According to Earth Matters, the answer is (a) 250 pounds. The responses were

split about equally between the four possible answers.

Ben Coleman of Callao wrote, "I really could not answer the question because I don't know of anyone who would use prime farmland to produce beef. I would use it to plant soy beans, beans, wheat, and corn," not "to produce apples or potatoes because that would not work in our area.... That was a misleading question because no one who pushes a cost effective pencil would raise beef on prime farmland."

Coleman noted that raising beef on prime farmland "would not even pay the interest involved." He is right that this question was probably misleading, but his comments illustrate the point that raising beef requires much more energy and resources than growing other foods.

11. The \$5 billion Americans spend each year on special diets is what percentage of the money needed to make family planning services available worldwide for all who desire them? (a) 10 percent; (b) 27 percent; (c) 50 percent. Forty-six people answered correctly — (c) 50 percent. This question came from an article in the Christian Science Monitor.

12. Out of the roughly 93 million Americans who commute to work by car, how many drive to work alone? (a) 45 million; (b) 53 million; (c) 70 million; (d) 90 million. According to a report from the World Resources Institute, the answer is (c) 70 million.

13. Women earn 10 percent of the world's income and own 1 percent of the world's property. They perform what percentage of the world's work? (a) 66 percent; (b) 33 percent; (c) 13 percent. Women perform (a) 66 percent of the world's work, according to Zero Population Growth and data from the United Nations; 49 people answered correctly.

**PRESERVING ACCURACY**

A recent column confused some Earth Day dates. The Earth Day celebration in Peace Park is Sunday, while the Earth Day celebration at the Missouri Department of Conservation in Jefferson City and the Prairie Restoration Project are tomorrow.

If you have a suggestion for a column, a gripe, a success story or whatever, write it down and send it to me, care of the Columbia Daily Tribune, PO Box 798, Columbia, Mo., 65205.