

# Ag and Food NEWSLETTER

## Cotton Acreage Control

SUGGESTIONS OF COTTON ACREAGE controls is causing some stir. Probably strongest at the moment is among California growers. Cotton is the number one cash crop there and California is the second largest producer among the states—with a per acre yield more than double the U. S. average. Most frequent reply to our questioning of growers and officials there was that it doesn't seem sound that inefficient production should be encouraged by asking the states doing the best job to cut as much as those less efficient. Applications of scientific methods are making best use of good resources, they say. Some areas with lower quality resources already have been converted to other production better fitted to conditions—a trend which Californians say should be encouraged.

## Iron Curtain Potash

HOW MUCH dollar strength is going behind the Iron Curtain in return for potash? It's being questioned by the House Committee on Agriculture this week. Some eyebrows are rising over the reports that of last year's \$2.5 million imports of 210,000 tons, 56,000 came from Russian-controlled East Germany—including that bought by government agency for use in Asia. Some hold it equivalent to trading with the enemy. The most consistent justification given to us has been shortage in U. S. last year (domestic production was cut off for a while by the strike of Communist-influenced miners' and smelters' union). Now, with domestic production running well and output in France, Spain, and West Germany at all time high levels, U. S. should be able to get along without East German potash.

## Import Quotas

THE QUESTION OF IMPORTS of farm products has been a hot one for some time. Recall the controversy over the importation of cheese. Now Secretary Benson has asked Congress to overhaul the machinery to give the President power to limit or ban, on short notice, imports of farm products which are in surplus in this country. The need for such machinery is urgent, he said, because of increasing competition appearing from abroad and increasing surpluses in this country. Existing system is very slow in comparison with the new, as a Congressional hearing must precede action. The new plan would help our international relations according to the secretary—for example, any aggrieved foreign country would have an opportunity to present its case. The President has ordered immediate investigation of agricultural imports and has asked the Tariff Commission chairman to recommend action for placing such imports as are now embargoed under Section 104 of the Defense Production Act under ban through section 22 of the Agricultural Adjustment Act.

## British Krilium

SPRING WILL BE GREENER than ever in England this year if Monsanto has its way. Krilium, vinyl acetate-maleic acid copolymer is now in production in the Newport, Wales, plant for sale to British gardeners. The new company Monsanto (soil conditioners) Ltd. is putting it on the market with the Monsanto trade-mark—a landmark for them, as it was in this country. An intensive advertising campaign appears to indicate that they feel that the production of consumer products is a worth-while venture. Monsanto tells us there are plans for marketing Folium similarly in England, but the product hasn't reached the shelves.

## Home Gardener Products

JUST NOW BECOMING AVAILABLE to the home gardener market is Carbide and Carbon's CRAG Herbicide-1, the sodium salt of 2,4-dichlorophenoxyethyl sulfate. Inactive when applied, it is activated by soil microorganisms, probably yielding 2,4-dichlorophenoxyethanol which kills weeds as they emerge in the upper soil layer. Virtually all seedlings fall victim, but established plantings are not harmed. According to the makers, it is active for 3 to 6 weeks after application. Also now available for home gardeners, from the Tennessee Corp., is a combination fertilizer-soil conditioner. Trade-named Loma, it is being produced under a licensing agreement with Monsanto, holder of basic patents. It's composed of Krilium and a 6-10-4 fertilizer.

## Frozen Bread

LATEST ADDITION to frozen foods is bread. Frozen bread is being test-marketed in Florida, South Carolina, Tennessee, and elsewhere in the South by Arnold Bakers, of Port Chester, New York. Arnold reports sales of more than a million loaves in six months. Preparation, through packaging, is the same as usual. Within three hours after baking it is frozen at about 0° F. and transported at that temperature. Some stores are selling direct from freezer and others thaw before selling. Arnold tells us the halt of aging and deterioration while frozen should reduce bread price by eliminating much of the 5-10% return of stale, unsaleable bread.