

FEDERAL AND STATE REGULATIONS

FDA and USDA Agree to Modify Sanitary Standards for Wheat

The Food and Drug Administration has modified its previously announced sanitary standards for wheat. In a memorandum of understanding signed by the Secretary of Agriculture, Mr. Benson and the Federal Security Administrator, Mrs. Hobby, the tolerances for weevil infestation of wheat have been revised upward.

The action was taken at the request of the Department of Agriculture which through the Commodity Credit Corporation is the largest owner of wheat in the country. CCC is now in the process of moving wheat out of elevators in anticipation of the winter wheat crop which will be coming into southern storage elevators about June. This wheat in transit falls under the jurisdiction of the FDA and if the standards which the FDA had previously announced had been enforced huge quantities of CCC wheat might have been condemned.

Under terms of the agreement the FDA will not recommend legal action against wheat which has been clearly identified as the property of the CCC, while Commodity Credit agrees to divert from domestic human food channels wheat which falls into classes 1 or 2 of the memorandum, which set standards of contamination. The CCC also agrees to fumigate any wheat which it finds to be contaminated with weevils. The two governmental organizations agree to try to get cooperation of farmers and grain elevator operators in the acceptance of the program.

Revoking of Beetle Quarantine Protested

The recent announcement by the Department of Agriculture that the federal quarantine on Japanese beetles will be revoked this year has resulted in protests from growers in threatened areas.

Representatives of growers in the beetle area, which extends from Virginia through New England and west to Ohio, have asked for and been granted a hearing before the Senate Appropriations Committee.

The intention to discontinue the quarantine program was announced in the recently revised budget for the Department of Agriculture. Last year the Federal Government appropriated \$482,000 for the program with the affected states matching the appropriation with a total of \$450,000. In the new budget the beetle funds have been cut to

\$150,000, which the USDA plans to use for beetle research.

The interested groups point out that if the Federal Government drops the quarantine program in July there will be no quarantine program in effect for at least six months, for the legislatures in the various states are not scheduled to reconvene until next year.

Sulfur Formulations Open Ended by OIT

The general relaxation of the sulfur shortage is reflected in the second quarter export quotas announced recently by the Office of International Trade of the U. S. Department of Commerce. The export quota for agricultural sulfur has been increased to 15,000 tons and sulfur formulations have been placed on an "open end" quota. Under the open end quota system the OIT controls the export in the interests of national security and must be notified of all sulfur exports. An export permit is not required to ship to free world ports; shipments to iron curtain areas, however, will be restricted.

OIT noted that the International Materials Conference has discontinued its allocation of sulfur and the general supply situation is considered to be favorable.

Agriculture Moves to Speed Eradication of Swine Disease

A recent regulation by the Department of Agriculture, to speed eradication of vesicular exanthema, requires that swine fed uncooked garbage can be moved across state lines only on permission of the Bureau of Animal Industry. The permit will be granted if a veterinarian will certify that the animals have been inspected and found free from infection just prior to shipment. Also under the regulation, swine not fed uncooked garbage must be accompanied by a certificate from the owner or shipper stating that the animals have not been fed uncooked garbage and have not been infected by or exposed to vesicular exanthema.

The disease was first diagnosed outside the state of California in June 1952. Within 30 days of that time it had spread to 16 states and the first federal quarantines were established July 29, 1952. The department has entered into a cooperative eradication campaign with the affected states, including the slaughter of infected hogs and the payment of indemnities for the animals destroyed.

Another action by the Department of agriculture, was the announcement by

Secretary Benson that the Bureau of Animal Industry will pay up to 50% of the appraised value of the destroyed animals without like payment by the state in which the hogs are found. Previously the payment could only be made if the state would match the amount paid by BAI. In some instances neither the state of origin nor of destination has been in a position to match the federal payments. In these cases the owners of the animals were forced to take a total loss or in some instances held the infected animals indefinitely delaying the eradication program.

In the State Legislatures

Some bills that have recently been introduced in the state legislatures and should be of interest to those concerned with agriculture and food processing.

Florida H97 proposes a severance tax on phosphate minerals. A \$10 license fee would be required from phosphate miners or firms engaged in phosphate mining. In addition a tax of 50 cents per ton would be imposed on all phosphate mined in the state.

Pennsylvania S.268 and H474 have been introduced to amend laws regulating the sale of penicillin in Pennsylvania. The amendments authorize the use of penicillin in animal feed supplements without the prescription of a physician or registered veterinarian.

California AB2523 would extend the provisions of the agricultural code relating to financial responsibility in pest control operations which required claimants to file reports of damage with the county commissioner, within 60 days of loss or damage resulting from the application of agricultural chemicals.

California AB2522 would amend the section of the agricultural code pertaining to licensing of pest control aircraft operators to restrict applicators to specific operations and to require additional qualifications.

Oklahoma H559 exempting seeds, feeds, fertilizers, insecticides, and agricultural machinery for the state sales tax, has passed the Senate.

Tennessee S155 to increase the vitamin content of margarine has been signed by the governor.

West Virginia H335 & S245 (Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 108, J. AGR. FOOD CHEM.) which proposed economic poisons registration fees of \$25 per brand, with a \$500 maximum has been killed.

South Carolina H1387 proposes a state economic poisons act with registration fee of \$5 per brand, with \$100 maximum.