

Ag and Food NEWSLETTER

Algae Sweepstakes

FIRST COMMERCIAL production of algae for food may come from work being done at University of California Sanitary Engineering Laboratories. They're using a double barreled approach. Algae are cultured in sewage oxidation lagoons, give off oxygen needed by the sewage decomposing bacteria, and the algae in turn get carbon dioxide, nitrogen, and minerals in the decomposing sewage. While algae yields are not as high as those obtained in synthetic media, economic advantage of using a waste product may override the synthetic media yields. Algae produced run about 50% protein and 30 to 35% fat. If a satisfactory method can be developed for harvesting the algae there is possibility of using it as a high protein feed supplement (AG & FOOD, July 22, pp. 596-7).

Amino Acids for Bread

LATEST STEP in the move to fortify cereal products with amino acids as a means of upgrading protein has just been taken by Du Pont. They have assigned patent rights on the use of lysine for that purpose recently acquired from the C. M. Armstrong Co., subsidiary of American Maize Products, to the U.S. Government. Under the agreement the use of lysine in fortifying cereal products will be free to anyone who wishes to use it. The amino acid has been found to be effective in raising the nutritive value of bread and other wheat products. Du Pont has perfected a process for synthesizing lysine and is making experimental quantities available to millers and food manufacturers for evaluation.

More Beets in the Northwest

AGRICULTURE is assuming increasing importance in the Pacific Northwest as additional lands are brought under irrigation with Columbia river water. Sugar beets are a case in point. Utah-Idaho Sugar Co. will put its second (and Washington's second) sugar beet refining plant in operation. New plant will have a capacity of 2400 tons of beets per day at the start; additional processing machinery will be added as beet crop warrants. Products are beet sugar, molasses, beet pulp, and a waste concentrate used by others as an amino acid source. Utah-Idaho owns Washington's other sugar beet plant. Its capacity is 3200 tons of beets per day; is located at Toppenish, Wash.

Farm Income Down

THE DROP IN FARMERS' CASH INCOME is already being felt. The national total for this year is estimated at short of \$31 billion, a drop from the more than \$32.5 billion last year. Communities in the Southwest are already beginning to feel the pinch, receipts from farm marketings are running about a third lower than last year. In Arkansas, income from cotton, the major crop, is expected to be 10% lower than last year. Income from livestock is down about 16%. Fertilizer seems to be the one bright spot. Sales down this summer seem to be looking up now that the fall movement is getting into full swing. Key to the optimism is the increase in bulk sales for this month. Industry spokesmen expect October to show even better results.

Feed Changes

DRASTIC CHANGES have taken place in the livestock feed relationships that will have far reaching effects on the feed business and the farmers, according to True D. Morse, Under Secretary of Agriculture. Speaking before a recent meeting of grain and feed dealers, Morse said: "Several signs reveal a lack of confidence in the price outlook for farm animals . . . they suggest that livestock producers are apprehensive both as to the short term and long term future." He said that if farmers take a calm view of the situation they should, by sound management practices, be able to come out ahead next year.

Agricultural Exports Decline

AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS for the U. S. have been dropping rather sharply this year, according to the recent figures from the Office of International Trade of the Department of Commerce. Total agricultural exports for January to June this year were valued at \$1.4 billion, last year same period it was \$2 billion. Biggest drops are in meat products down to \$53.6 million from \$90.9 million last year, and wheat down from last year's \$602 million to \$344 million. Imports of agricultural products by the U. S. were also down but we still import more agricultural products than we export. Total value of U. S. agricultural imports to June of this year is \$2.2 billion, last year for the same period it was \$2.4 billion.

Herbicides Depend on Soils

RECOMMENDATIONS for application rates of herbicides may have to be revised to consider soil types, according to a paper presented before the Pesticides Subdivision at the recent ACS meeting in Chicago. J. A. Garman, reporting on the relative effectiveness of various herbicides, said that the toxic effects of herbicides to both the crabgrass weeds and cotton crop varied widely in sandy and sandy loam soils. Crabgrass growing in sand could be controlled by 1.5 pounds of CIPC (isopropyl-N-(3-chlorophenyl)-carbamate) but sandy loam soil required about 2.5 pounds to do the same job. The higher level of herbicide would have been injurious to cotton grown in sand, but on sandy loam soil the cotton could take up to 16 pounds without ill effects.