Ag and Food NEWSLETTER

Benson's Butter

BUTTER DISPOSAL plan which Secretary Benson was supposed to announce early this month has still not been made public. Agriculture officials are now considering a program which would offer government butter for 10 cents a pound; distributors would have to match the government 10 cent butter with equal quantities purchased at market price. Result would be butter for sale in the stores for about 45–50 cents per pound. USDA officials say that this program might be expected to increase the per capita butter consumption as much as 25%, and would dispose of the butter surplus in about a year and a half.

Dried Milk For Animal Feed

SURPLUS DRIED MILK stocks owned by the USDA are being offered for sale to the animal feed industry at from 3.5 to 4 cents a pound. The CCC has more than half a million pounds of dried milk which were acquired by the Government for about 16 cents per pound. Secretary Benson says that the feed sale use will not interfere with the other USDA programs for disposal of dried milk. He said "We have so much on hand that we can and will continue vigorously every effort to obtain greatest possible distribution (of dried milk)."

Diazinon Registered

DIAZINON, Geigy's new fly control agent (AG AND FOOD, March 17, page 291) has been registered for interstate shipment by the USDA. The product is reported effective against houseflies resistant to chlorinated hydrocarbons and is available for commercial use in 25% wettable powder or 1% bait form. It is not for use in dairy barns, food plants, or human dwellings. Diazinon was found comparable in efficiency to malathion in USDA tests some time ago, but lack of collected safety information has held back recommendation which is now being considered. Diazinon is *O,O*-diethyl-*O*-[2-isopropyl-4-methyl pyrimidyl (6)] thiophosphate.

Systemic Residues

SCHARADAN (octamethylpyrophosphoramide), according to latest reports from Monsanto Chemical, is removed from cottonseed oil during the refining operation. While not presenting problems when applied to ornamental plants and seed crops for insect control, residue questions have been raised regarding this systemic for use with food and forage drops. Now it seems that timing and rate of application to fruit, grain, vegetable, and forage crops can be regulated to minimize residues at harvest. Analysis of cottonseed and the oil produced from Schradan-treated plants over three growing seasons show that refining removed the insecticide.

Ammonia Ballast

AQUA AMMONIA may be carried to the Middle East as ballast for tankers outward bound for oil which previously have carried water ballast. One major oil company is now considering making aqua ammonia as a source of fertilizer nitrogen and also as a paying cargo for tankers bound for the Middle East. A potential aqua ammonia market for countries with large scale agricultural operations, sugar cane, cotton, and rice might be opened up by this operation.

More Ammonia

MORE AMMONIA, to the extent of 200 tons a day, will come from a new $15 million plant, according to plans of Mississippi River Fuel Corp. The company has acquired a site near St. Louis and expects to be producing 225 tons of ammonium nitrate per day by late 1955, using its own natural gas. Nitrate will be marketed as solid and solution, with anhydrous ammonia for agriculture and industry.

Is Everybody Happy?

SEVERAL COMPANIES may share in final disposition of ammonia certificates of necessity, from present indications. Monsanto's decision to cancel its certificate adds 80,000 tons of capacity to the 163,000 tons which are eligible for certification at this time. In addition, companies which went ahead with nitrogen construction without certificates may be able to get plants certified for rapid write-off. These plants would not count against 243,000 ton totals. ODM has plenty of applications (12 since Feb. 15) to take care of the revised nitrogen goals. Trend seems to be toward smaller plants which can serve limited areas. Such plants overcome problems associated with transportation and storage.

Dry Milk For Bread

A NEW BREAD MAKING process developed by the American Dry Milk Institute could mean an increase of 60% in the use of nonfat dry milk solids in bread making. The process eliminates the making of "sponge," now a necessary step in most bakeries, and results in substantial savings in processing time. The new process involves the preparation of a "ferment" which can be made in large quantities and metered to the dough mixing machines. Breads made by the dried milk process are comparable in taste and shelf life to those made by existing methods. Ferment process is now in operation in one large commercial bakery and is being installed in another.