

Ag and Food NEWSLETTER

More Pounds, Fewer Dollars

MORE POUNDS OF SYNTHETIC ORGANIC PESTICIDES were sold in 1953 than the year before, according to the Tariff Commission's annual report. The increase was a small one, less than 1% to a total of 334 million pounds. Price reductions, however, dropped the annual value by 10% to \$119 million. Production also declined, from 418 million pounds in calendar 1952 to 356 million pounds for '53.

Systox Registered For Fruits And Vegetables

SYSTOX HAS BEEN APPROVED for use in some food crops by the USDA and California. California approved the systemic phosphate in May and became the first state to do so. One important provision of the California approval, state requires growers to obtain permit before using the insecticide. USDA approved the material as a once-per-season spray for crops, including apples, potatoes, and walnuts to be applied no later than 21 days before harvest. Systox registration has been held up previously because there was no adequate simple assay for residues on harvested fruit.

Dipterex

NEXT ORGANOPHOSPHORUS INSECTICIDE on the market may be Dipterex, referred to earlier as L-13/59, (AG AND FOOD March 17, page 275). Chemagro Corp. has been licensed by Bayer of Germany to produce the insecticide. Distributor will be Pittsburgh Coke and Chemical. Pittsburgh will market a 1% formulation of Dipterex in sugar for use in dairy fly control barn. Chemical formula of the insecticide, *o',o'*-dimethyl ester of 2,2,2-trichloro-1-hydroxyethyl phosphoric acid. It will be available the end of July.

The Cotton Front

PESTICIDE APPLICATION ON COTTON, if properly timed, can pay off in definite profits according to reports at recent meeting American Cotton Congress. Tests in 1953 produced gains from \$50 to \$200 per acre over untreated fields, depending on severity of infestation. For every \$2 invested for application, grower can expect up to \$16 in increased production. Chemical defoliation of cotton was reported to have several advantages in addition to greater efficiency in mechanical harvesting. Complete defoliation, by elimination of food supply, reduces overwintering population of boll weevils and pink bollworm. Exposure of bolls to sun is also reported to accelerate boll opening, retard fiber and seed deterioration.

High Price Of Cocoa

HIGH PRICE OF COCOA, now threatening existence of the 5-cent candy bar, held the center of the stage at recent meeting of the National Confectioners' Association in Chicago. With cocoa beans now selling at 60 to 70 cents a pound, about 13 times the 1941 price, candy makers were cheered to hear that long-range prospects for better supplies are good, with production trends in Latin America pointing upward and improved production techniques gaining acceptance throughout the cocoa-growing world. However, the seriousness of the present situation is causing them to take a close look at confectionery coatings based on hydrogenated vegetable oils and dry portions of the bean previously considered as by-products.

Benson's Latest

SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE BENSON predicts that 40 million acres of farmland may be diverted from price-supported crops by his recently announced three-point program of marketing quotas, acreage allotments, and cross compliance. An all-time record supply of wheat, which means acreage allotments will be down to the 55 million acre "floor" set by Congress, also may affect other support crops under the compliance provisions. Once total acreage allotments are established, farmers cannot plant more than this total of all restricted crops to be eligible for continued supports. Referendum of wheat growers on marketing controls and acreage allotments will be held on July 23. Benson hopes by then to tell farmers what support price to expect for their crops. He believes the program will be approved by farmers, even under a flexible support system.

Milk Surplus

PROPOSALS FOR DISPOSITION of the milk surplus seem to mount in a direct relationship to the tonnage in storage. House Agriculture Committee is now considering two proposals. One would authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to sell dairy products back to manufacturing plants at a cost less than the Government paid for them. Other proposal: Let manufacturers sell milk products at whatever price they can get, Government to pay difference between market and parity prices. American Bakers' Association has come out against proposal for Government to sell surplus dried milk at less than cost. About 300 million pounds of dried milk are used annually by bakers. However, ABA is opposed to subsidies and fears it would be dangerous to establish a precedent by using bread to consume surplus products.