

## LETTERS

### No Heavy Metals in Torula

DEAR SIR:

There seem to be, both here and abroad, groups which show more interest in knifing torula yeast than in facts. An outstanding instance is the report in your Oct. 13 issue that German studies found arsenic, antimony, lead, and iron in torula yeast; and then goes on to mention our plant. No samples of our yeast are mentioned as being analyzed by these Germans, but the article clearly allows reference by the casual reader that our product contains heavy-metal impurities.

We cannot let this news story pass without sharply challenging some of the statements reported. The German findings not only are not true of American-made torula yeast, but they are undoubtedly not true of present day German-made torula yeast.

First, as to lead content. Years ago, sulfite pulp mills used a good deal of lead equipment to withstand acid, and spent sulfite liquor accordingly contained too much lead for safe yeast. But in those days no one in the U. S. made yeast from spent sulfite liquor.

Long before 1948 when our plant was built, stainless steel replaced lead in sulfite mills. Our torula never has contained any significant lead. Published analyses of our torula yeast made by our competitors have shown never more than 3 to 4 p.p.m. lead, which is so insignificant an amount that their papers called no attention to it. Our findings invariably have been of the same order.

We never have detected any arsenic or antimony in our product. As for the German report of iron, the only reasonable comment is, "So what?"

We cannot speak authoritatively for the German producers of torula yeast, but we do know a good deal about their technology from repeated visits back and forth. They, too, use stainless steel extensively. Lead replacements made during the war might account for lead in German yeast manufactured before they could shift back to stainless.

The arsenic in those German samples strengthens our suspicion that the analysis you reported covers torula yeast made under war conditions, not as the Germans make it today. German pulp mills during war years are said to have

got much of their sulfur from a source of pyrites, which contains arsenic that would sublime over and eventually get into the yeast. To the best of our knowledge, there never has been any other probable source of arsenic in German torula yeast. Germany's war needs for protein kept torula yeast plants operating at capacity, even at risk of incidental toxic metals in the civilian diet. The Germans now have access to pure sulfur and are using it.

The native sulfur used in the pulp mill that supplies our plant's raw material contains no arsenic and could, therefore, contribute no arsenic to yeast. Such sulfur is better for pulping, regardless of subsequent torula manufacture.

Let me state unequivocally that torula yeast manufactured by our company contains no significant quantity of any undesirable metal. In fairness to our German competitors, I believe that the same sweeping statement can be truthfully made of their product since they worked out of the war economy.

J. M. HOLDERBY  
Vice President

Lake States Yeast Corp.



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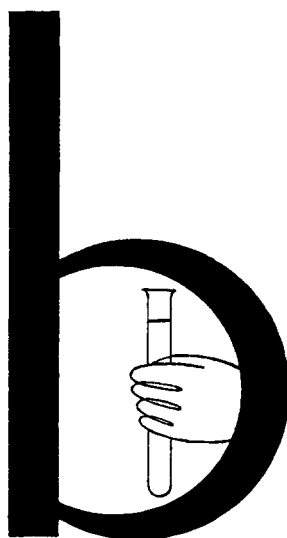
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