

Acerola Juice Ready for Commercial Production

MASS PRODUCTION METHODS have been developed for the richest source of natural vitamin C known. A six-ounce glass of the juice of a small Puerto Rican fruit contains as much of this essential food element as 15 quarts of orange juice, declares its producer, the Bib Corp. Samples of acerola fruit have assayed as much as, 80 times richer in vitamin C than orange juice, which averages 50 mg. per 100 cc.

Acerola juice will be marketed in blends with apple, pear, pineapple, and other juices as a natural protective food for infants and children. Advantage over fortification with synthetic vitamin C is that the American Medical Association does not grant its seal of approval to foods containing synthetic materials.

The acerola tree grows wild in Puerto Rico; domestication required eight years of effort. The tree is an extremely poor germinator. When ripe the fruit is red and the juice reddish orange; both have a pleasant tart flavor. However, the green fruit and juice have much more vitamin C.

Vitamin content drops sharply soon after picking the fruit. Because the acerola is very perishable, a canning pilot plant has been built in Puerto Rico. Fruit often is juiced and canned within an hour from the time it leaves the tree. High ascorbic acid content make ordinary cast iron canning equipment

Picking the acerolas at the moment just before the green fruit turns red assures that vitamin C content will be at its maximum



unsuitable; stainless steel must be used to prevent corrosion.

Puerto Rico's government is encouraging cultivation of acerola trees on family plots and use of the fruit by the islanders. The government hopes it will be a new cash crop. Scheduled crops can now be guaranteed on a scale large enough for commercial value. Trees have been planted in schoolyards everywhere in the island, and teachers are instructed to give two acerolas daily to each child.

Vitamin C is synthesized by all plants and many animals. During wartime in England the seed-bearing fruit of the rose was a prime source of ascorbic acid. Thousands of volunteers collected the fleshy, budlike structure that forms below the flower, called rose hips, for processing into national rose hip sirup.

Volcanoes Endanger Mountain-Grown Coffee

Central American volcanoes, now increasing in their activity, are jeopardizing "mountain grown" coffee.

So, far, farmers have been unable to grow the famed beans anywhere except on mountain sides in Nicaragua and Costa Rica. Since 1947, thousands of acres in the mountain-side plantations of Nicaragua have been devastated by the Santiago volcano.

Both the Poas and Irazu volcanoes are erupting in Costa Rica; two others are active in Nicaragua. Many Central American volcanoes are larger and potentially more explosive than more famous vents in other parts of the world. A severe eruption in a Central American vent probably would produce little lava, but could be extremely devastating because of gas fumes and heavy ash falls.

Fred M. Bullard, University of Texas geologist, surveyed volcanoes in both countries as a preliminary move to establish observation posts near more active vents (the two countries have more than 30 volcanoes which have erupted in historic times). Working under the auspices of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History, Dr. Bullard has conferred with government officials and scientists in both countries for a coordinated study of volcanic activity.

People

Wheaton Named VP in Charge Of American Potash Eston Div.

George S. Wheaton, formerly assistant vice president of American Potash &

Chemicals Eston Chemical Division, has been promoted to vice president in charge of that division. He is also active in Western Electrochemical, a company in which American Potash has a substantial interest, and American Lithium Chemicals, recently formed company controlled by American Potash. **Thomas F. Edson**, former assistant vice president of research and development, has been promoted to the newly created position of vice president in charge of special engineering projects. He will be in charge of construction and initial production of the American Lithium plant near San Antonio. **Richard J. Hefler**, secretary of the company, has been named to another newly created post, assistant to the president, and will also continue his duties as secretary.

Gerald A. Fitzgerald, recently returned from a two-year tour of duty in Iran as chief of the food processing branch, Foreign Operations Administration Mission to Iran, will set up a consulting practice in product research, development, and quality control. Previous to Point Four work, he was chief chemist in the Birds Eye Laboratories and director of the Frozen Food Foundation.

Edwin J. Pinigis has left the agricultural chemicals division of Pittsburgh Coke & Chemical to join the agricultural chemicals division of American Potash & Chemical as a technical service representative in Los Angeles.

Sylvan Cohen, formerly chief chemist of Gallowhur Chemical, has been named vice president of the company in charge of research. His headquarters will be Ossining, N. Y.

W. T. McLaughlin has been promoted to manager of special account sales for the agricultural chemicals division of Pittsburgh Coke.

Deaths

James T. Jardine, 72, former chief of the USDA office of experiment stations and director of research, died Oct. 24 in Washington, D. C. Born in Idaho on a ranch, Mr. Jardine earned his way through Utah College as a cowpuncher, later teaching there and at the University of Chicago. He joined the Forest Service in 1907 and headed forest and range investigations for 10 years, during which time he did early work on erosion. From 1920 to 1931, he was director of the experiment station at Oregon State College. He retired from his position as chief of the office of experiment stations in 1946.