

OIL & FAT INDUSTRIES

The Editor's Page

Tomorrow's Oil Mill

REPRESENTATIVES of the cottonseed crushing industry assembled at the convention of the National Cottonseed Products Association, at New Orleans during the latter part of last month, listened to several addresses relative to the recently completed economic survey of their industry.

The survey proved conclusively, on paper at least, that the crushing of cottonseed for oil, as conducted at present in the South, is not a profitable business. The plain facts, as expressed by the composite figures from some six hundred mills (covering three years of operation), revealed that the crushers are in the manufacturing business for the benefit of the cotton farmers, who receive the bulk of the mills' earnings in the form of payment for the cottonseed. The best that the mill owners seem to have gained is a fair wage for management efforts.

Various remedies for the situation have been proposed. One which seems to have met with no little favor is that the existing larger and financially stronger mills should buy and scrap the numerous small unprofitable mills. Such a move would, of course, be of little benefit. As soon as the industry as a whole again showed respectable profits, new capital would be attracted, new projects would be initiated and in a short while the same condition on excess milling capacity would reappear.

Earnest efforts are under way, with the able co-operation of the Department of Agriculture, to stabilize a method of grading seed, so that the farmer who delivers poor quality seed will be paid only a percentage of the basic price, thus enabling the crusher to calculate a profit from his operations, even when the yield of oil and ammonia in the form of products is reduced. This step should help the mills appreciably, but as long as the potential seed-crushing capacity of the mills as a whole remains considerably greater than the seed yield of the cotton crop, the old competition for the purchase of

seed will persist, with the result that allowances for quality will be remitted and all other considerations of profitable operation may be neglected in the scramble to *get the seed*.

The forward-looking crushers will prepare to keep their mills in operation by adapting them for handling other oil-bearing materials than cottonseed. The development of soy beans in the middle west in the past few years has been remarkable. This crop, as well as peanuts and several other vegetable sources of oil, is well suited to much southern land available for cultivation. Certain imported raw materials, also, can be handled in the cottonseed mills.

The successful mill of the future will be an oil mill, not a cottonseed mill, operating at least three hundred days a year, on a variety of oil-bearing material.

Progress in Oil Chemistry

THE American Oil Chemists' Society has just brought to a close a most successful year. The period was marked by an awakening of interest in one of the most involved problems of research in the chemistry of fats; the nature, cause and control of rancidity.

Rancidity and consequent spoilage of edible fats and bakery products is responsible for the loss of millions of dollars annually in this country alone. For many years chemists and bacteriologists have considered the subject only in a desultory manner, usually arriving at the point of admitting that the cause or causes were just beyond detection.

Now, however, with the advent of new apparatus of various types for the measurement of the progress of oxidation and rancidification, investigators are viewing the problem with renewed hope of success.

At the Fall Meeting of the Oil Chemists' Society which was held in Chicago in November last, several valuable contributions to the subject of rancidity and instability of fats, particularly of fats intended

for shortening purposes, were presented. Incidentally, this Fall Meeting, the fourth to be held by the Society, was attended by over a hundred members and visitors, rivaling the Annual Meetings in interest and enthusiasm evoked.

Once again, at the Twenty-second Annual Meeting, just concluded at New Orleans, the "Symposium on Rancidity" brought forth a number of pertinent papers, and held the close interest of a large attendance.

The damaging effects of rancidification are not confined to the fats used for edible and shortening purposes. Wherever in the technical field there is demand for sweet, clean fatty products, the desired results cannot be obtained with fats or oils which have become subject to the taint. This is particularly true where the resulting product is paint, varnish or other surface covering, or soap.

In a laudable effort to extend the scope of its influence, the American Oil Chemists' Society has voted at its recent meeting to extend to the Fall Meetings equal powers of study and review of proposed analytical and research methods with that formerly belonging only to the Annual Meetings held in the South in the spring of each year. The Fall Meetings are held in the Middle West or East and are therefore more accessible to chemists and technologists from the industrial centers of the country.

A new drive for membership is being launched by the society, and the advantages of membership for every chemist who is in any way connected with scientific or technical work on fats, fatty oils, soaps or allied products are manifold. The Official Journal of the Society, which is mailed monthly to every member, reports the progress of the society's analytical and research work. The opportunities for direct contact with others engaged in similar work offered by the two meetings each year are invaluable. The co-operative analytical program of the Society offers oil chemists a tangible means of verifying the accuracy of their analytical work. Membership in the society is a recommendation to employers of a chemist's qualifications in his chosen field. Every chemist should belong to the American Chemical Society. Every one working with fatty products or soaps should belong also to the American Oil Chemists' Society.

The corporate name of Emery-Drew, Inc., has been changed to Wecoline Products, Inc. The offices of the corporation are maintained, as heretofore, at 122 East 42nd St., New York City. The stock interest formerly held by Emery Industries, Inc., has been purchased by E. F. Drew and Co.

A news report from Moscow states that the Soviet Union plans to spend 300,000,000 dollars in buildings and equipment for the food industries this year, paying special attention to sugar, flour, vegetable oils and fisheries.

Joseph M. Wafer has been appointed Assistant Sales Manager of Industrial Chemical Sales Company. Mr. Wafer was formerly advertising manager of the same company and more recently Eastern sales manager of American Solvents and Chemical Corporation.

The State Law Reporting Company, of New York City, has been appointed official reporter of the Federal Trade Commission, for the reporting of all the hearings of the commission throughout the United States, including the investigation of the cottonseed industry now being conducted. Anyone interested in a transcript of the proceedings of cases heard before the commission or the testimony of a particular witness may purchase such transcript from the official reporter.

Hellmann Mayonnaise Company, a subsidiary of General Foods Corporation, is extending its advertising to the radio field with a series of concerts over the National Broadcasting System. The programs are broadcast daily from Monday to Friday inclusive, starting June 1, from 12:00 Noon to 12:15 P.M.

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