

Texas Welcomes You to the 43rd Annual Meeting

IT is particularly appropriate that Texas has been chosen by the American Oil Chemists' Society as the location of the 43rd Annual Meeting. This state is an outstanding source of fats and oils, but cottonseed oil is its major contribution to the industry.

Few people realize the tremendous importance of cotton and cottonseed in our economy. By many standards it is the largest industry. It is certainly the leader in the nation with regard to the volume of employment it creates in both agriculture and industry. About 10% of all gainfully employed persons in the United States depend directly upon cotton and cottonseed for their livelihood.

Texas ordinarily produces over three times as much cotton as the second ranking state. This ascendancy is reflected in cottonseed production with almost a third of the nation's output coming from Texas. Last season government cotton acreage controls held production of cottonseed in Texas down to 1.2 million tons, a relatively small quantity, but still about 30% of the nation's total. It is estimated that this season the figure will be increased to 1.7 million tons.

There is a unique feature of the cottonseed crushing, and other industries based on cottonseed, that puts them in a vulnerable position. This devolves from the fact that these industries are based on a crop that is not independently produced for its own value but which is produced and generally valued only as a by-product of cotton lint. The consequent uncertainties make the cotton oil business a perilous one indeed.

NEVERTHELESS cottonseed crushing is a mighty big business. It ranks among the upper one-fourth of all industries of the nation in value of products. Texas, again, is far and away the largest producer of cottonseed oil and has the largest segment of the cottonseed crushing and related industries. About 30% of the nation's cottonseed crushing mills are located in Texas, where the industry has ranked among the six leading industries of the state since 1890.

Incidentally, and in spite of large cottonseed oil production, these mills have an estimated excess crushing capacity of one million tons. Most mills are not only prepared to, but do crush other oil seeds, principally soybeans and peanuts. This surplus crushing capacity invites Texas farmers to diversify their crops by producing other oil seeds. Such practices not only benefit the land, but this year a large castor bean crop served to fill important military demands for the oil.

Probably 80% of the crude cottonseed oil produced in Texas is further processed into consumer goods by Texas refineries. These refineries also handle crude oil brought in from other states. Texas ranks first among all states in the number of establishments and the number of persons employed in cottonseed oil refining and in the manufacture of cooking fats. In 1947 the shortening and vegetable cooking oils industries in Texas added a value by manufacturing of \$21,709,000. This made it the third ranking state in the nation in this regard. Texas also ranks high in the manufacture of oleomargarine, salad oil, and salad dressing products.

SO it is with good reason that Houston, the leading city of Texas and of the South, should be chosen by the American Oil Chemists' Society for its 43rd Annual Meeting—and what a convention this one promises to be!

Houston's fabulous Shamrock hotel will be the scene of this year's sessions. That means there will be luxurious accommodations second to none in the country and an unlimited choice of entertainment and recreation facilities "after hours." The order of business at this year's gathering promises a most stimulating three days. The papers to be delivered will touch on subjects of immediate and abiding concern to all. Everyone will go home much better informed on the latest developments in the trade and with many valuable new ideas. Too, this year's meeting will be joined by a large number of trade exhibitors—greater than at any previous convention, it is hoped.

All in all, the 43rd meeting of the Society in Houston will be one long to be remembered as one of the most profitable, most interesting, and most entertaining the Society has ever had.

The Houston Committee is looking forward to having a large attendance, April 28-30, 1952.

WILLIAM ARGUE
Chairman, Houston Meeting