AOCS–1125	W-S. D. Wong	Determination of Hydroperoxides of Methyl Oleate & Linoleate in Oxidized Methyl Ester Mixtures
AOCS–1126	A. Kalbasi-Ashtori	Oat Oil Refining & Stability Tests

from Washington

BHT use temporarily restricted

The Food and Drug Administration has proposed to temporarily restrict the use of butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT) to current levels in foods for which it is now approved. The restriction would remain in effect pending completion of safety tests. FDA said the need for additional testing is not based on any new evidence that present use of BHT may be unsafe. The testing was described as part of an FDA review of all substances that, like BHT, have been considered Generally Recognized As Safe (GRAS) for use in foods. Most such substances have been in use for long periods and their safety determined years ago. The new program is to insure all substances meet safety standards as determined through modern testing methods.

The restricted status would continue until the new studies are completed by manufacturers. The test would resolve whether BHT can cause changes in the human level, an effect found in rats. Rats, however, do not break down the chemical in the body the same way that humans do. The new tests would include determining which test animals would be appropriate and then conducting the tests.

Companies using BHT were asked to submit comments on the FDA proposal. The firms wishing to use BHT would have to make a commitment to do the studies, under the FDA announcement. If the firms did not, FDA could seek removal of BHT from the market.

BHT is one of the synthetic compounds that helps keep edible fats and oils from turning rancid in food products. It is used in margarines and oils, jams and jellies, nut products, breakfast cereals, snack foods, frozen dairy products, chewing gum, and processed fruits and vegetables.

The FDA also has announced that food companies will be able to use either the term "hydrogenated" or the term "saturated" on food labels used after Jan. 1, 1978, in meeting FDA requirements on labeling of fat sources. An FDA decision on which term is to be required after July 1, 1979, had not been made by the end of June. Food industry representatives had asked FDA to decide which term would be used so they could rewrite labels only once, in time to meet the Jan. 1, 1978, requirements. The FDA's announcement was an assurance that there would be ample time allowed for the second label change.

A Procter & Gamble petition to have cocoa butter substitutes prepared from other vegetable oils to be declared GRAS has drawn comments from chocolate representatives that the substitute product should have a specific usual or common name. Among the suggestions: cocoa butter substitute, synthetic cocoa butter, and cocoa butter replacement.

The U.S. State Department has decided that the USDA will represent the nation alone on the executive committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. The USDA and the FDA had each supported its own agency's case to be representative. (*JAOCS* July). USDA's Eddie F. Kimbrell will be the accredited U.S. representative on the commission. The Department of State said both agencies have legitimate interests in Codex work and urged them to work together. Dr. Robert Weik was FDA's candidate to be U.S. representative to the Codex panel. ●