

From Washington

September forecast for soy: 2.03 billion bushels

USDA in September predicted the 1984 soybean crop would yield 2.03 billion bushels, slightly below the 2.04 billion bushels forecast in early August. Meanwhile, USDA has been forecasting a record 4.25 billion pound crop of peanuts, 29% more than last year, 24% above 1982 and 268 million pounds greater than the previous record produced in 1981.

FDA may ease rules for food additive research

The Food and Drug Administration is expected to propose regulations to exempt investigational food additives from the usual food additives requirements. Under the planned proposal, an investigational Food Additive Petition would have to be submitted, with permission to start an investigation effective in 30 days unless the petition were denied or action deferred by the agency. The petitioner then would have to report progress and any adverse effects to FDA. The proposal would require special labeling, with commercial distribution of the investigational food additives prohibited. In the past, FDA has received requests for investigational use exemptions for such additives as artificial sweeteners, irradiated fish, jojoba oil, parabens, polydextrose and sucrose polyesters. The policy has been to handle these on a case-by-case basis. Details: *Food Chemical News*, Aug. 13, 1984, p. 5.

EPA may exempt methyl esters from tolerance requirements

The EPA has proposed exempting methyl esters of higher fatty acids from tolerance requirements when used as surfactants in pesticide formulations. Methyl esters of higher fatty acids already are cleared as antidusting agents and for use in animal feeds. Details: *Federal Register*, Aug. 29, 1984, pp. 34247-34248.

OTA memo on fish oil cited by Senate committee

The fatty acids present in fish oil "have unique properties that could improve the health of Americans," according to an Office of Technology Assessment Health Program memorandum which said evidence shows fish oil might play a role in preventing heart disease. The memo was cited in a report by the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation approving a bill to establish a National Fisheries Marketing Council for the U.S. fish industry. Research on the health effects of fish oil is being conducted by the Department of Commerce and by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute. Details: *Food Chemical News*, Aug. 13, 1984, p. 43.

Toxicology board recommends against linolelaidic testing

The National Toxicology Program's (NTP) Board of Scientific Counselors has recommended that linolelaidic acid not be tested for carcinogenicity. The acid is a minor component of margarine, commercial shortening and hydrogenated vegetable oils. The National Cancer Institute previously had nominated linolelaidic acid for testing. Details: *Food Chemical News*, Aug. 27, 1984, pp. 38-39. Meanwhile, NTP's Ad Hoc Panel on Chemical Carcinogenic Testing and Evaluation has recommended that the potential confounding effects of vegetable oil gavage in toxicology testing be evaluated. Details: *Food Chemical News*, Aug. 20, 1984, pp. 30-40.