

From Washington

Senators urge conference on diet, health relationship

Ten U.S. senators have asked USDA Secretary John Block to set up a major conference in 1985 to deal with questions of diet and health. In a Sept. 10 letter, the senators pointed out that the public had been subjected to conflicting studies, reports and pronouncements about the long-term effects of specific foods on human health. "The result has been massive confusion and some erosion of public confidence, not only in many of those who have issued these pronouncements, but to some extent also in those who are responsible for the quality of our national food supply, and who determine the relative nutritional value of foods of animal origin in particular," they wrote. USDA previously had hoped to hold a meeting in the fall of 1984 to review recommendations by the federal advisory committee reviewing the Dietary guidelines. However, the committee in September was not expected to complete its work until the end of the year. Details: *Food Chemical News*, Sept. 24, 1984, p. 53.

Copies available of NTP panel report on carcinogenesis testing

The National Toxicology Program (NTP) has announced that copies of the report of its ad hoc panel on chemical carcinogenesis testing and evaluation are available from the NTP Public Information Office, MD B2-04, Box 122 33, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709. For the report, the panel reviewed the basic biology of chemical carcinogenesis and recommended methods the NTP should use to detect and evaluate chemical carcinogens. Details: *Federal Register*, Sept. 10, 1984, p. 35563. In another matter, the Food and Drug Administration and the NTP have formalized an agreement to cooperate and share information to assure the quality and integrity of safety information. Details: *Federal Register*, Sept. 28, 1984, pp. 38362-38363; *Food Chemical News*, Oct. 1, 1984, pp. 56-57.

Japanese approval to save Ralston shipping, storage costs

The Japanese government has given Ralston Purina Co. a "seal of approval" on soy protein, a move which the company believes will help it increase its share of the \$150 million-a-year Japanese market for such proteins. Currently, Ralston Purina exports about \$10 million a year in vegetable proteins to Japan. The company says the action will eliminate the need for dockside inspection of each shipment as it arrives in Japan, resulting in a savings of approximately 40 per cent in shipping and storage costs. Ralston is the first U.S. concern to receive such approval. It was granted after Japanese officials inspected company soy protein facilities in Memphis, Tennessee, and Pryor, Oklahoma. Details: *Wall Street Journal*, Sept. 25, 1984, and *Food Institute Report*, Sept. 29, 1984, pp. 11-12.

Moisture to be phased out as factor in soybean grading

USDA's Federal Grain Inspection Service has ruled that moisture content will be deleted as a grade-determining factor in U.S. Standards for corn, sorghum and soybeans, effective Sept. 9, 1985. Details: *Federal Register*, Sept. 12, 1984, pp. 35743-35745. Meanwhile, USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation has set the final level of price support for 1984 crop soybeans at \$5.02 a bushel, the statutory minimum. Details: *Federal Register*, Sept. 25, 1984, p. 37651.

From Washington

Panel recommends evaluation of vegetable protein products

An Expert Work Group on Protein Quality convened by USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service has recommended that products formulated with large quantities of vegetable proteins, animal byproducts, fish protein isolates or using new and unusual processing methods or ingredients are "particularly important" to evaluate for protein quality. The panel's recommendations were printed as a special supplement to the September issue of the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. Reprints of the panel's first report, including five background papers, are available from the FSIS Information Division, Room 1163-South, Washington, D.C. 20250. Details: *Food Chemical News*, Sept. 24, 1984, pp. 35-37.

Food processors appoint irradiation task force

The National Food Processors Association (NFPA) has organized a food irradiation task force to establish an industry position on food irradiation and to educate the public on irradiation technology. Serving on the committee are representatives of the NFPA, the National Pork Processors Council, McCormick, the United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association and the American Meat Institute. Details: *Food Chemical News*, Sept. 3, 1984, p. 8.

Comprehensive New Volume—AOCS Monograph 10

Dietary Fats and Health

Edited by E. G. Perkins & W. J. Visek

This new AOCS monograph is the proceedings of a conference held in Chicago in December 1981. Containing 60 chapters by leading scientists in biochemistry and nutrition, the book presents the latest scientific information in fat chemistry and technology related to nutrition. Specifically, it covers the general role of fats in nutrition, metabolism of isomeric fats, and the role of vitamins A, D, E and K in health and disease. Included are controversial topics such as the role of lipids in heart disease and cancer, and the effects of diet on high density lipoproteins and the techniques of lipoprotein fractionation. The book also contains information devoted to emerging research on dietary fats and nutrition in such areas as multiple sclerosis and the immune response. Numerous illustrations and references are found throughout.

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