

From Washington

Deadline extended on proposed grain handling rules

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has extended the comment period on proposed safety requirements for grain handling and storage facilities to June 8, 1984. The rules, originally published in the Jan. 6, 1984, *Federal Register*, apply to grain elevators, dust pelletizing plants, feed mills and rice, flour, corn and soybean milling operations. Written comments must be submitted in quadruplicate to the Docket Officer, Docket H-117, Room S6212, 200 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20210. For further information, contact James F. Foster, U.S. Department of Labor, telephone 202-523-8151. Details: *Federal Register*, Feb. 24, 1984, p. 6923.

Health, diet comments issued by NIH, USDA

A new Surgeon General's report on nutrition and health being prepared is slated to be completed in mid to late 1985. Assistant Surgeon General Dr. J. Michael McGinnis, who heads the newly formed Nutrition Policy Board, is directing the project. Details: *Food Institute Report*, Jan. 28, 1984, p. 5. Meanwhile, the National Institutes of Health study showing decreased incidence of heart disease in subjects taking a drug to lower blood cholesterol does not warrant immediate changes in dietary advice distributed by USDA, the department's Human Nutrition Information Service (HNIS) has said in background papers prepared on the study. HNIS said USDA will continue to suggest moderation as set forth in the Dietary Guidelines until its Dietary Guidelines advisory committee and NIH's National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute make further recommendations on the issue. Details: *Food Chemical News*, Feb. 27, 1984, p. 23. On another health-related topic, the National Cancer Institute's major public information campaign launched March 6 stresses seven steps in cancer prevention, including changes in individuals' diets to increase fiber and reduce fat. Details: *Food Chemical News*, March 12, 1984, p. 17.

Panel urges guidelines to assess toxicological studies

An ad hoc panel on carcinogenesis testing says the National Toxicology Program needs a set of guidelines to help determine whether the results of a particular bioassay are because of treatment or whether the results are confounded. The NTP panel's draft report outlined approximately 50 recommendations, including 4 dealing with the controversial practice of oil gavage, questioned because the oil itself may promote tumor growth. The panel recommended that for studies in which the agent is administered by gavage, NTP should attempt to select a compatible vehicle and volume to minimize the oil's effect on the bioassay outcome; also, in view of corn oil's association with carcinogenicity in some bioassays, NTP should continue to study the incidence and mechanisms of such outcomes using data within the bioassay program and from other sources; and NTP should explore and validate alternatives to vegetable-oil gavage, such as aqueous suspending agents, microencapsulation and highly polar nonvegetable oil. Details: *Food Chemical News*, Feb. 20, 1984, pp. 40-43.

Specific fat labeling legislation introduced

Senator Howard Metzenbaum of Ohio in February introduced legislation requiring food processors to declare the specific source of fat or oil and to label sodium and potassium on all foods regulated by the Food and Drug Administration. The proposed Dietary Information Labeling Act of 1984, Metzenbaum said, would force food manufacturers to abandon the existing "and/or" labeling practice that allows them to label foods as containing one or more different types of shortening. Details: *Food Chemical News*, March 5, 1984, p. 40.