

From Washington

NAS official perceives 'remarkable consensus' on diet

Diverse groups have reached a "remarkable degree of consensus" about dietary recommendations to the public, according to a National Academy of Sciences official at the St. Louis meeting of the American Chemical Society in April. Dr. Sushma Palmer, Executive Director of the NAS Food and Nutrition Board, said the consensus was unusual because some recommendations were intended to lower the risk of particular disease while others were directed at the promotion of overall health. She said there is still a need to develop "a consistent set of criteria for interpretation of data on diet and chronic diseases," because differences in the recommendations are in part caused by the lack of such standards. Palmer recommended that the considerations for developing a national dietary policy should include: whether they should be specific (i.e., specifying quantities of food ingredients), whether food safety laws need to be modified, whether guidelines should be directed to the general population or only to subgroups at high risk and in what manner food and agriculture industries can cooperate with public organizations in the development and implementation of dietary policy. Details: *Food Chemical News*, April 16, 1984, p. 32.

FDA amends rule on bakery products

The FDA is amending the final decision on a rule to set standards of identity for bakery products to prohibit the addition to bakery products of coloring except that which may be present in butter or margarine, artificially colored up to "medium high" intensity. He also affirmed a decision of Nov. 9, 1983, to permit the use of lecithin as an optional ingredient in egg bread as well as in other bakery products. Details: *Federal Register*, Friday, April 6, 1984, pp. 13690-13692.

Codex protein unit proposes standard

The proposed draft codex general standard for vegetable protein and specific standards for soy protein products and for wheat gluten were advanced to Step 5 (provisional acceptance by the Codex committee) at the April meeting of the Codex committee on Vegetable Proteins in Ottawa, Canada. The committee adopted a compromise figure of 40% protein content for VPP in general and provided that the processing should control such factors as trypsin inhibitor, hemagglutinins, glucosinolates, etc., and should not appreciably impair the nutritive value. The standard also provided that VPP products are to be labeled as "_____ Protein Product" with the blank filled in with the name of the specific sources of the vegetable protein, such as soy, peanut, cottonseed or rapeseed. Details: *Food Chemical News*, April 16, 1984, p. 6.

FDA publishes revisions for infant formula products

The FDA is proposing to revise the infant formula nutrient requirements of the Infant Formula Act of 1980, based on the 1983 recommendations of the Committee on Nutrition of the American Academy of Pediatrics (CON/AAP), and the Codex Alimentarius Commission's "Recommended International Standard for Infant Formula." The impetus behind the CON/AAP and the Codex recommendations was the growing industry trend of using vegetable protein ingredients to replace milk protein ingredients, but which do not supply some of the essential nutrients that are found in cow's milk. FDA requests comments on the proposed revisions, which may become effective 180 days after the publication of the final rule because of the importance of infant formula and the health and safety issues. Details: *Federal Register*, Wednesday, April 11, 1984, pp. 14396-14402.