

From Washington

USDA commended for soy protein use

The Soy Protein Council (SPC) has commended the U.S. Department of Agriculture for approving the use of soy protein products in its ground beef procurement program for school lunch and other domestic feeding programs. "Government approval of expanded use of soy proteins in federal feeding programs exemplifies the increasing acceptance of soy proteins in improving the nutritious and economic value of today's food system," SPC chairman Tom Moore of Archer Daniels Midland Co. said. USDA in June announced that it would purchase bulk beef and patties extended with soy protein in addition to traditional purchases of 100% beef. USDA's decision was based on a recommendation by the Grace Commission as well as the successful record of soy protein use in USDA child nutrition programs and Department of Defense federal feeding programs. According to the Grace Commission report, a 20% soy mixture to extend ground beef, donated under the National School Lunch Program, would offer cost savings without any adverse impact on nutritional value or student acceptance of meals. SPC is the trade association representing the principal U.S. producers of soy protein products and makers of soy based protein foods. SPC member companies are Archer Daniels Midland Co., Cargill Inc., Central Soya Co. Inc., Grain Processing Corp., Griffith Laboratories USA, The Procter & Gamble Co. and A.E. Staley Manufacturing Co.

Codex discusses vegetable protein labeling

Individual Codex committees drafting standards for products containing vegetable proteins will decide whether labeling with the traditional product name is acceptable or will mislead consumers, the Codex Alimentarius Commission agreed at its annual session in Geneva in July. A draft general guideline permitting the use of the product name laid down in a Codex standard when vegetable proteins are substituted in foods under specific conditions was adopted at Step 5 by the Commission, despite opposition from West Germany which said it was against using vegetable and milk proteins to substitute for meat proteins. A working group of the Committee on Vegetable Proteins indicated that at its next session it might recommend a new method for measuring protein quality. It said the preferred approach is based on amino acid composition data, a method supported by the U.S. Another working group is assessing the adequacy of several methods under development to differentiate vegetable and animal proteins in a mixture. The Commission adopted the draft international general standard for vegetable protein products at Step 5, then advanced it to Step 6, and adopted the draft international standard for soy protein at Step 5. Details: *Food Chemical News*, Aug. 5, 1985, pp. 11-12.

Dog study clears BHA; sulfite use defended

A Food and Drug Administration dog study on butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA) has revealed no carcinogenicity. The 180-day dog feeding study involving BHA at doses of 1.0% and 1.3% was conducted after a four-nation working group called for more information following a Japanese BHA study indicating carcinogenicity in the forestomach of rats. FDA officials said the dog study showed no toxicological changes at either level in the stomach or esophagus. Meanwhile, work under way by the University of Minnesota on BHA metabolism in the rat forestomach indicates BHA may not be a direct-acting carcinogen but may metabolize to a more active form. That study will run for another year. The International Life Sciences Institute has indicated it will hold an international symposium on BHA in Washington within the next year. Details: *Food Chemical News*,

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FDA seeks research on diet and the brain

July 29, 1985, p. 30. Meanwhile, potato dehydrators, defending the use of sulfites in their industry, said sulfites help retard off-flavors produced in nonenzymatic browning and from vegetable fat oxidation. According to a spokesman for the Northwest Food Processors Association, the only known substitutes for the antioxidant function of sulfites are butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT) and related chemicals which, he said, are not effective in preserving vitamin C and the textural quality of the product. Details: *Food Chemical News*, July 22, 1985, pp. 19-20.

The Food and Drug Administration is soliciting research proposals to explore the relationship between diet and brain function. The agency said the objective of such research would be to determine the extent to which diets with varying ratios of protein and carbohydrate affect the functional state of synaptic and receptor activity of selected neurotransmitters. FDA said it anticipated a cost reimbursement contract for approximately two years of study. Details: *Food Chemical News*, July 15, 1985, pp. 6-7. Meanwhile, speakers at a National Institutes of Health seminar on "A Calorie is a Calorie? Efficiency of Energy Utilization" in July said cutting back on carbohydrates may not be as effective a diet strategy as reducing fat consumption, and practicing a low fat diet as a cancer prevention strategy may increase the risk of cancer if carbohydrate consumption is raised excessively. Details: *Nutrition Week*, July 18, 1985, p. 6.

FDA approves irradiation for pork

FDA on July 22 cleared the use of gamma radiation to control *Trichinella spiralis* in pork. The agency set a minimum dose of 30 kilorads and maximum dose of 100 kilorads. The action was in response to a petition submitted a year ago by Radiation Technology of Rockaway, New Jersey. Before irradiation can be used for pork, however, USDA must issue a food additive regulation permitting such use. In addition, USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service must decide if it will require retail packages to carry notice of the use of irradiation in processed products made with irradiated pork. Details: *Federal Register*, July 22, 1985, pp. 29658-29659; *Food Chemical News*, July 22, 1985, pp. 18-19; Aug. 5, 1985, pp. 3-4, 40-41; *Nutrition Week*, Aug. 1, 1985, p. 7.

Regulations seek improved peanut handling

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service has modified regulations for 1985 crop peanuts to require handlers to more effectively separate loose shelled kernels from peanut stocks earmarked for edible use. Setting up different screen sizes for handlers to use, the agency noted that there is higher aflatoxin incidence in loose shelled kernels than other components of farmers' stock peanuts. In addition, the regulations require handlers to properly ventilate equipment for transporting peanuts in an effort to discourage growth of *Aspergillus flavus* mold. Details: *Federal Register*, July 12, 1985, pp. 28430-28439.

Vitamin D given single GRAS rule

FDA has issued a single Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS) rule for vitamin D, covering crystalline vitamin D₂, crystalline vitamin D₃, and vitamin D₃ resins. The regulation provides that vitamin D may be used in infant formula in accordance with the Infant Formula Act and in margarine in accordance with the food standard. Crystalline vitamin D₃ occurs in and is isolated from fish liver oils. It also is manufactured by ultraviolet irradiation of 7-dehydrocholesterol produced from cholesterol and is purified by crystallization. The rule also states vitamins D₂ and D₃ must meet Food Chemicals Codex specifications. Details: *Food Chemical News*, July 29, 1985, p. 31.