

From Washington

FDA affirms GRAS status for linoleic acid in food

The Food and Drug Administration has affirmed linoleic acid as generally recognized as safe (GRAS) as a direct food ingredient. The agency said that because no food-grade specifications currently exist for linoleic acid, it will work with the Committee on Food Chemicals Codex, National Academy of Sciences, to develop acceptable specifications. Details: *Federal Register*, Dec. 13, 1984, pp. 48533-48535. Meanwhile, Fuji Oil Co. Ltd. has asked that GRAS status be granted cocoa butter substitute prepared from directed esterification of partially saturated 1,2,3-triglycerides derived from palm oil and ethyl stearate in the presence of lipase enzyme from *Aspergillus niger*. Details: *Federal Register*, Dec. 28, 1984, p. 50477. In separate action, the FDA has proposed affirming enzyme-modified milk powder, enzyme-modified butterfat, enzyme-modified steam-rendered chicken fat and enzyme-modified refined beef fat as GRAS as direct food ingredients. Details: *Federal Register*, Nov. 23, 1984, pp. 46164-46167.

NIH panel urges dietary fat reduction

American consumers again have been advised to curtail their intake of fatty foods as a way of holding down cholesterol levels in the blood. A panel of 14 scientists formed by the National Institutes of Health issued a report in December concluding that reducing relatively high levels of cholesterol in the bloodstream will lower the risk of heart attacks. The panel recommended that all Americans, especially those with a high cholesterol level, adopt a diet deriving no more than 30% of its calories from fat, with no more than 10% from saturated fat, and a maximum of 300 milligrams of cholesterol a day. Details: *Food Institute Report*, Dec. 15, 1984, pp. 9-10. Meanwhile, the American Institute for Cancer Research in Washington has approved an additional \$518,820 to support research on the relationship between diet and nutrition and various types of cancer. The organization now has allocated more than \$2.2 million for projects exploring possible links between diet and cancer. Details: *Food Institute Report*, Nov. 10, 1984, p. 11.

EPA publishes guidelines on volatile organic compounds

The Environmental Protection Agency has announced the availability of the final control techniques guideline document for control of volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions from air oxidation processes in the synthetic organic chemical manufacturing industry. Copies can be obtained from the Environmental Research Library (MD-35), EPA, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina 27711, telephone 919-541-2777.

EPA considering methyl ester use in pesticide formulations

The Environmental Protection Agency has expanded the tolerance exemption of methyl esters of higher fatty acids to include use as a surfactant in pesticide formulations. Details: *Federal Register*, Dec. 19, 1984, p. 49290. Meanwhile, EPA has proposed a tolerance exemption for methyl esters of fatty acids derived from edible fats and oils when used as a solvent or cosolvent in pesticides. Details: *Federal Register*, Nov. 28, 1984, pp. 46769-46770.

FDA clears canola oil for food usage

The Food and Drug Administration has ruled that low erucic acid rapeseed (canola) oil and partially hydrogenated rapeseed oil are generally recognized as safe (GRAS) for use as fats and oils in foods. The action came in response to a petition filed by the Research Branch of Agriculture Canada in 1982. In an effort to ensure safety,

FDA said it will limit the GRAS affirmation to rapeseed oil containing 2% or less of erucic acid. From: *Chemical Marketing Reporter*, Feb. 4, 1985, p. 32.

**USDA proposes increase
in peanut support price**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture in December proposed increasing the national average support level for 1985 quota peanuts to \$560.60 per ton, \$10.60 above the 1984 level. In addition, USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation proposed price support rates on additional peanuts at the 1984 level of \$185 per ton. Details: *Federal Register*, Dec. 12, 1984, pp. 48344-48346. Meanwhile, USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service issued an interim rule in November setting a uniform deduction for excess moisture in peanuts for all marketing areas. According to the revision, moisture over 7% will be deducted from the gross sale weight of all peanuts when determining the quantity being marketed. Details: *Federal Register*, Nov. 13, 1984, pp. 44889-44890.

**FASEB unit studying
effects of *trans* acids**

The Life Sciences Research Office of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) has undertaken a study on *trans* fatty acids. An ad hoc review panel was scheduled to meet in February to examine information on the levels of *trans* fatty acids in the current U.S. food supply, levels used in the past 10 to 20 years and levels predicted over the next five to 10 years; estimates of U.S. dietary intake; the toxicological, physiological and nutritional effects, and available methods for measuring *trans* fatty acids and positional isomers in fats, oils and foods. Contact F.R. Senti, Life Sciences Research Office, Milton O. Lee Bldg., FASEB, 9650 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD, telephone 301-530-7030, for more information. Details: *Federal Register*, Dec. 13, 1984, pp. 48615-48616.

**USDA revises
flaxseed grades**

USDA will no longer grade flaxseed "U.S. Sample Grade" when moisture content exceeds 9.5%, under revisions to flaxseed standards scheduled to take effect July 13, 1986. However, the standards will continue to require official inspection certificates to state moisture content of flaxseed. Details: *Federal Register*, Dec. 20, 1984, pp. 49425-49428. Meanwhile, USDA has proposed deleting test weight per bushel as a grade-determining factor of soybean standards and replacing current classes of green, black and brown soybeans with a newly-defined class, "Mixed soybeans." Details: *Federal Register*, Dec. 20, 1984, pp. 49474-49478.

**Fish protein concentrate
promoted as food supplement**

Concentrados Marinos S.A. of Lima, Peru, has asked the Food and Drug Administration to amend food additive regulations to allow the use of fish protein concentrate as a food supplement. Details: *Federal Register*, Jan. 2, 1985, p. 180. In a separate petition, Ralston Purina Co. has asked the FDA to allow the use of gamma radiation for microbial disinfection of laboratory diets for rats, mice and hamsters. The radiation source is cobalt-60, cesium-137 or electron beam. Details: *Federal Register*, Dec. 18, 1984. In another petition, Mitsubishi Chemical Industries Ltd., Japan, has asked FDA to allow the use of dimethyl sulfoxide and isobutyl alcohol as solvents in preparing the direct food additive sucrose fatty acid esters. Details: *Federal Register*, Jan. 4, 1985, p. 551.