
FROM WASHINGTON

EPA changes rules on Delaney clause

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has announced it will change the way it evaluates pesticides that may also be considered food additives. The agency will use a risk/benefit, or *de minimus*, approach when looking at certain pesticides that must meet requirements of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA). EPA's position is that a *de minimus* approach for pesticides that may be food additives would resolve some conflicts between the two acts.

A risk/benefit approach allows an agency to balance the health risks of using certain compounds with possible benefits. Under FIFRA, EPA may register a pesticide that poses a negligible risk of cancer after deciding the agricultural benefits are greater than the health risks. However, when EPA determines tolerance levels for pesticide residues on food, it must do so under the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act which includes the Delaney clause. The Delaney clause prohibits the issuance of food additive regulations for additives that have been found to cause cancer in test animals.

The differences between the two acts make it difficult to regulate pesticides which have been found to induce cancer in test animals, EPA said. "Such pesticides may be ineligible for food additive regulations under FFDCA even if they have been found to pose no unreasonable risk to humans and qualify for registration under

FIFRA." Such difficulties might be resolved by using a negligible risk approach, according to EPA.

EPA also is suggesting that a legislative solution may be required. "A legislative solution, stating clearly that the agency has the authority to grant food additive regulations for pesticide residues posing at most a negligible risk, clearly would be desirable," EPA said. Details: *Federal Register*, Oct. 19, 1988, pp. 41104-41123.

According to *Food Chemical News*, the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee may consider liberalization of the Delaney clause when Congress reconvenes.

Nutrition actions include bill veto

President Reagan, vetoing a nutrition monitoring bill, said the bill would create "unnecessary and complex federal bureaucracy" and would "set federal nutrition efforts on the wrong course." The measure called for shared nutrition-monitoring responsibility by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Details: *Food Chemical News*, Nov. 14, 1988, p. 52.

Meanwhile, USDA and DHHS each will select nine persons to serve on the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee. The committee will help the agencies determine whether a review of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* is warranted based on any advancement in scientific knowledge since the guidelines were last published. Information about the committee may be obtained from the Nutri-

tion Education Division, Nutrition Information Service, Federal Building, Room 363, 6505 Belcrest Rd., Hyattsville, MD 20782. Details: *Food Chemical News*, Nov. 2, 1988, p. 2.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) data indicate the public's knowledge about fats lags behind concerns about fats as risk factors for chronic disease. Even though all segments of the population know more about dietary fats and cholesterol and more people are having their blood cholesterol levels checked than in the past, there are significant gaps in the public's knowledge about specific fatty acids and cholesterol, according to Alan S. Levy, chief of consumer studies at FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition. Details: *Food Chemical News*, Nov. 14, 1988, p. 17.

FDA chooses IIT to be food center

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has named the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) as headquarters for the National Center for Food Safety and Technology. IIT is to receive a \$3.7 million grant from FDA.

The center, which will be a research consortium for industry, academia and government, will employ 50 scientists, engineers and support personnel at IIT's Moffet Technical Center. Its research areas will include food processing, packaging, distribution, storage and safety. According to Darsh Wasan, IIT's vice president for research and technology, the center will be fully operational by the end of 1989.