from Washington

The Food and Drug Administration published its rules on nonclinical laboratory studies in the Dec. 22, 1978, Federal Register (pages 59986 to 60025). The original proposals were published in November 1976. Nonclinical tests would exclude those involving human subjects, clinical studies, or field trials with animals. The regulations cover studies "that support or are intended to support applications for research or marketing permits for products regulated by the Food and Drug Administration."

The FDA will accept comments on its proposed rule for substitutes for milk, cream, and cheese until March 19, 1979. The proposed standards of identity for such products were first published in September 1978, but FDA received many requests for an extension. Original proposals were published on page 42118 in the Sept. 18, 1978, Federal Register; the extension was published Tuesday, Dec. 19, 1978, p. 59093.

Food Chemical News reported in late December that the Codex Alimentarius Committee on Processed Meat and Poultry Products has decided to begin developing guidelines for use of vegetable food proteins in meat and poultry products. The committee felt it would be 1980 before a new Codex committee, on vegetable proteins, would begin work.

The Federal Consumer Product Safety Commission says its interim statement on carcinogens in consumer products, published in June 1978, is again open for comment (until Feb. 26), and hearings will be held on the statement. The action follows a court ruling that the commission has not followed proper procedures in first adopting the statement. Details: Federal Register, Thursday, Dec. 28, 1978.

The Federal Trade Commission is expected to take action sometime before May on an FTC staff report about food advertising trade regulation rules, Food Chemical News reported last December. The Phase I report includes proposed regulations for using terms such as cholesterol, polyunsaturated fats, and fats. Basically the rules would require complete disclosure of a food's saturated fat, cholesterol and total fat content whenever fats, fatty acids, or cholesterol are mentioned in an advertisement. Claims that a food is "high" in polyunsaturated fats or "low" in saturated fats would require a complete disclosure of content of the advertised food and the food with which it was being compared, the staff report recommended. The staff report recommended that ads could say there is a scientific disagreement as to the relationship between diet and heart disease, but would require additional statements, including one that many scientists believe such a relationship does exist. The 268-page report was delivered to the commission on Nov. 29. Federal Trade Commission's address is: FTC, Pennsylvania Ave. at 6th St., Washington, D.C. 20580.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission has proposed rules for labeling of household use products containing hazardous substances. The proposed rules would set standards on size of type used, placement of warnings, and similar items. Previous rules have been more general in nature. Details: Federal Register, Wednesday, Dec. 13, 1978, p. 58195.

The Food and Drug Administration, in response to a petition from Monsanto Co., has established a tolerance of 0.1 part per million in palm oil for the herbicide glyphosate; a tolerance of 20 parts per million for soybean hulls also was established. Other commodities also were covered by similar orders, all published in the Federal Register on Tuesday, Dec. 5, 1978, p. 57000-57002, along with some proposed tolerances, p. 57003.

Ciba-Geigy has proposed that a tolerance of 0.1 part per million of the pesticide metolachoir on raw soybeans and in the fat, meat, and by-products from cattle, goats, hogs, horses, poultry and sheep. Details: Federal Register, Thursday, Dec. 28, 1978, p. 60624.

The Environmental Protection Agency has established a tolerance of 0.1 part per million for residues of the fumigant Magnesium phosphide on a variety of raw agricultural commodities, including cottonseed, peanuts, soybeans, and sunflowerseeds. The FDA simulaneously established tolerance of 0.1 ppm on animal feeds and 0.01 ppm for processed foods. Details: Federal Register, Thursday, Nov. 30, 1978, p. 56042, 56039.

R&D — Private and public views

Research and development's role in developing new products is viewed as more important than it was five years ago, according to a survey of chief research and development executives by an international executive search firm.

About two-thirds of the 288 respondents to a survey by Heidrick and Struggles cited new product development as R&D's top contribution, compared to 40% holding that opinion five years ago. Five years ago about 10% of the R&D chiefs said "delaying product obsolesence" was R&D's chief contribution, compared to 2% now. About 25% continue to say that lowering costs of current products is the most important function.

About two-thirds of the R&D chiefs said government and environmental concerns exert the strongest societal forces on research, with consumerism, new marketing techniques, and foreign competition perceived as having lesser impact.

Single copies of "Profile of a Chief Research and Development Executive" are available by written request to Heidrick & Struggles Inc., 125 S. Wacker Dr., Chicago, IL 60606.

Meanwhile, the American Association for the Advancement of Science has completed a report on congressional action on research and development funds in the federal budget for FY 1979. The AAAS report said R&D often is not identified as such in budget reports, and therefore estimates were used a great deal. Generally, however, it estimated Congress had boosted R&D spending about 1.1% over the President's budget for FY 1979 to a total of $29.5 billion.

In the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Congress boosted research funds by about 11% over the presidential budget, including a 15% boost of $48.8 million for Agricultural Research Service functions (now part of the Science and Education Administration), for a total of $380 million. The Congressional changes meant "no fundamental change in the patterns of R&D funding in (USDA)," the report said.

National Institutes of Health R&D funds boosted about 13% by Congress, following a traditional pattern in which the presidential budget is submitted at figures subsequently increased by Congress, the report said. Total NIH-R&D funds approved by Congress were approximately $3 billion.