

Introduction to this World Conference Proceedings Issue of JAOCS



The World Conference on Soya Processing and Utilization was the result of the realization by several persons of three trends that were becoming apparent in Latin America.

First, soya production was rising. Brazil and Argentina have paced this increase that has seen soya crops increase from 1.9 million metric tons in 1970 to more than 19 million metric tons in 1980.

Second, imports of soybeans, soya meal and soya oil from the United States also were rising during the same period from an aggregate total of approximately 500,000 metric tons in 1970 to nearly two million tons in 1980.

Third, within Latin America there had been an increasing awareness of the potential of soya to meet nutritional needs of rapidly increasing populations. As a source of both calories (in the form of edible oil) and high-quality protein, soya offers probably the best means available in the near future for offsetting the increasing disparity between population growth and food supply in Latin America.

Finally, there was an obvious need for increased knowledge of how to use soya to improve nutrition.

The American Oil Chemists' Society had helped organize a 1976 conference in Europe on oilseed and vegetable oil processing technology. Ernst Goebel, who was to become cochairman of the 1980 meeting, subsequently approached the AOCS with the observation that the 1976 meeting in Amsterdam had been a valuable conference, but relatively few persons from Latin America had attended. He suggested a similar conference be organized in Latin America so that persons who could put such knowledge to practical use would be able to attend.

This conference, with some 1,100 participants from 35 nations, was the result. Approximately 300 registrants and 250 student attendees were from Latin America.

The conference was organized into six major topics: Production; Processing; Effects of Processing on Soya Oil—Analysis, Physical Characteristics and Nutrition; Soya Meal in Animal Feeds; Soya Protein for Human Foods: Preparation, Characteristics and Uses; and Soya Protein for Human Foods: Nutritional and Regulatory Aspects. Fifty-four specialists addressed the plenary sessions during the week; more than 60 additional speakers presented papers during afternoon discussion sessions. The success of the conference

could be seen not only in attendance at these regular sessions, but in the intense small conversations in hallways, restaurants and elsewhere throughout the week.

Several dignitaries attended the opening ceremonies to express wishes for a successful conference and to underline the importance of improved agricultural technology. E. Alvarez Luna, director of the Instituto Nacional de Investigaciones Agricolas (INIA) in Mexico City, was the personal representative of the President of Mexico, Jose Lopez Portillo. The Governor of the State of Guerrero, Ruben Figueroa Figueroa, for several years has encouraged soya production in Guerrero; his support for the conference was a major factor in its success. Dr. N.M.S. Banafunzi, director of the Instituto Superior Agropecuario Autonomo del Estado de Guerrero, committed considerable resources of his institute to the meeting, arranging in addition several visits to local communities so that registrants could see how soybeans are grown and used in an effort to improve local nutritional patterns.

The U.S. Ambassador to Mexico, Julian Nava, participated in the opening ceremonies to introduce U.S. Under Secretary of Agriculture Alex Mercure, whose comments are published in these proceedings along with those of Frank Ray, president of the American Soybean Association.

The conference achieved its purposes: to transmit state-of-the-art knowledge and technology about the processing and use of soya, particularly for nations that could improve the nutritional quality and quantity of foods in their diets through a sustained growth in the use of soya; to provide a means to establish constructive and continuing dialogues among experts in soya production and processing and those professionals who can put such knowledge to practical use.

This proceedings provides a permanent record of the conference and will permit those who were unable to attend to share in the information exchange. In this volume, all talks have been grouped under the six major topics of the conference, regardless of which day the talk was presented during the meeting. While all plenary session speakers were asked to provide a publication manuscript, discussion group speakers were not required to do so. Questions about individual papers should be mailed directly to the authors, whose addresses are provided.

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