From Washington

USDA soy advisory panel to study production and use

The Soybean Research Advisory Institute, created by Congress under a section of the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981, has been asked to assess soybean production and utilization research in the U.S.A. and to submit a comprehensive report of its findings to congressional committees. Among those named to the body are Billy E. Caldwell, head of the Department of Crop Science, North Carolina State University; Michael F. Campbell, protein products development manager, A.E. Staley Co., Decatur, Illinois; Edgar E. Hartwig, research agronomist with USDA's Agricultural Research Service, Stoneville, Mississippi; John E. Heilman, vice president of engineering, world processing division, Continental Grain Co. in New York; Keith J. Smith, research director of the American Soybean Association, St. Louis, Missouri; and Leamon D. Williams, vice president of research, Central Soya Co. Inc., Fort Wayne, Indiana. Details: *Federal Register*, Friday, Nov. 19, 1982, p. 52204; *USDA News Releases* Nov. 12-19, 1982, pp. 12-13.

Fat, cholesterol advertising claims to be examined by FTC bureau

The Federal Trade Commission's Bureau of Consumer Protection will undertake a six-month survey of fat and cholesterol claims made in advertisements as a prelude to considering enforcement strategies, according to an agreement reached among the commissioners and Bureau of Consumer Protection Director Timothy J. Muris. The decision came at the December 17, 1982, meeting at which a seven-year-old food advertising industry-wide regulatory proposal was abandoned. The proposal, tentatively approved by the FTC in 1980, would have set a definition for "natural," required disclosure of controversy over heart disease-diet connection, and regulated energy, fat and cholesterol claims made in food advertising. Details: *Food Chemical News*, Dec. 6, 1982, pp. 48-51; Dec. 20, 1982, p. 2; Jan. 3, 1983, pp. 10-11.

FDA considering revising meal aflatoxin limitations

The Food and Drug Administration is considering a review of the existing aflatoxin action levels for whole cottonseed, corn and peanut meal, according to FDA Commissioner Arthur Hull Hayes Jr. Noting FDA's recent move that increased the cottonseed meal aflatoxin level from 20 parts per billion (ppb) to 300 ppb intended for beef cattle feed mixtures, Hayes said, "New scientific information indicates that aflatoxin levels above 20 ppb in animal rations may not be detrimental to animal health and may not result in harmful residues in animal-derived foods such as meat, poultry, eggs and milk." Meanwhile, FDA Associate Commissioner for Legislation and Information Robert C. Wetherell Jr. has warned that FDA will not be able to support states which decide to continue with a 20 ppb aflatoxin limit for cottonseed meal. Details: *Food Chemical News*, Nov. 22, 1982, pp. 30-31; Nov. 29, 1982, pp. 24-25.

Reagan signs contract sanctity

President Ronald Reagan in January signed a bill guaranteeing the sanctity of some U.S. contracts on agricultural products in the event of an embargo on exports. The contract sanctity legislation, contained in a bill renewing the Commodities Futures Trading Commission, will prevent any future embargo from affecting contracts with delivery

dates falling within 270 days of the embargo announcement. Soybean growers had sought the measure after seeing the effect of U.S. embargoes on trade relations with foreign customers.

Canola oil GRAS proposal draws lots of comments

The Food and Drug Administration denied a request by the National Fish Meal and Oil Association to extend the comment period on a proposal to affirm rapeseed oil as Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS). In August, the Research Branch of Agriculture Canada petitioned FDA to grant GRAS status for low erucic acid rapeseed oil (LEAR) as a food ingredient. The petition was noted August 13, 1982, with a 60-day review period. The National Fish Meal and Oil Association then asked for a 90-day extension on the comment period to allow submission of its study, "A Comparison of Partially Hydrogenated Fish Oils (PHFO), Partially Hydrogenated Soybean Oil (PHSBO), and Rapeseed Oil (RSO)," which was not yet available. FDA officials said they would not extend the comment time but would consider information in the study once they receive it. Meanwhile, the National Soybean Processors Association told FDA it would be inappropriate to classify LEAR under GRAS regulations and that it should be reviewed under FDA's more stringent rules for food additives. In addition, the National Cottonseed Products Association asked FDA to consider published reports concerning potential undesirable effects from LEAR oil. The North Dakota Farm Bureau, however, said it supports the GRAS affirmation of rapeseed oil. Noting that "the safe experience in use of rapeseed oil in Canada and Japan would indicate a margin of safety for this product," the group said Canada's canola oil is competitive with U.S. soybean oil in the Japanese market and is blended with corn oil in oleomargarine manufacturing and with other oils because of its cooking qualities. Details: *Food Chemical News*, Nov. 15, 1982, pp. 26-28; Nov. 22, 1982, p. 8.

France's Institut National de Recherches Agronomiques has selected a new variety of rapeseed called PRIMOR with less than 1% erucic acid content in its oil, the French Embassy in Washington has told the Food and Drug Administration. In a letter to the agency, L'Attache Agricole Ralph Ichter said French studies on the eventual toxicity of rapeseed oil due to the presence of erucic acid suggest 5% erucic acid in rapeseed oil as the maximum allowed for human consumption. Details: *Food Chemical News*, Nov. 22, 1982, p. 7.

30% soy protein level endorsed by expert panel

An expert panel has concluded that soy protein may be substituted for 30% of the meat protein several times a week for those susceptible to iron deficiency—infants, children, adolescents and females of childbearing age—provided their diets contain adequate amounts of meat, fish, poultry and ascorbic acid. It added that for those with low risk of iron deficiency, the 30% substitution will have no adverse effect on iron nutrition. Preparing the report was a task force of the International Nutritional Anemia Consultative Group, supported by a grant from the Agency for International Development, the Defense Department, USDA and FDA. In the findings, the task force said the levels of soy protein substituted for meat in the U.S. Armed Services and school lunch programs seems reasonable "if the diet contains enhancers of iron bioavailability in adequate amounts," but added that in other parts of the world, "the advisability of soy substitution for meat will

depend on the quantities of meat consumed." The Nutrition Foundation has published the findings in the monograph, **The Effects of Cereals and Legumes on Iron Availability**. Details: *Food Chemical News*, Nov. 15, 1982, pp. 29-31.

Pfizer seeks GRAS status for CO_2 use as solvent

Pfizer Central Research has asked the Food and Drug Administration to recognize in its Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS) affirmation proposal for carbon dioxide "the growing importance of and commercial interest in the use of carbon dioxide under high pressure either as a liquid or a supercritical gas as a substitute for organic solvents in the extraction of a wide variety of foods." FDA on Oct. 1, 1982, proposed carbon dioxide for GRAS affirmation, but listed its use only as a leavening agent, processing aid, a propellant aerating agent and gas, with no limitations except current good manufacturing practice. Details: *Food Chemical News*, Oct. 4, 1982, p. 4; Jan. 3, 1983, pp. 13-14.

EPA sets malathion tolerance on sunflower seed at 8 ppm

EPA has set a tolerance of 8.0 parts per million for residues of the insecticide malathion in or on sunflower seeds as a result of post-harvest application. The rule went into effect Dec. 8, 1982. Details: *Federal Register*, Wednesday, Dec. 8, 1982, pp. 55225-55226.

Kritchevsky named to Dietary Guidelines panel

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has established a Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee to review comments and make recommendations on the Dietary Guidelines pamphlet. One of the nine persons invited to serve on the committee is AOCS member David Kritchevsky of the Wistar Institute. The advisory group, made up of three people representing USDA, three representing the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and three selected from a list submitted by the National Academy of Sciences, will report to the secretaries of both USDA and the Department of Health and Human Sciences. Details: *Food Chemical News*, Dec. 13, 1982, p. 27; *Federal Register*, Friday, Dec. 10, 1982, p. 55508.

FDA creates office for 'orphan drugs'

The Food and Drug Administration has established an Orphan Products Development Office to identify and promote the availability of products useful in treating or diagnosing uncommon diseases. For information about this service or invitations for new drug applications, contact Orphan Products Development, FDA, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857, telephone 301-443-4903. Details: *Federal Register*, Friday, Dec. 10, 1982, pp. 55520-55522.

Oxidized soy isolate approved as binder-adhesive

The Food and Drug Administration has amended food additive regulations to include the use of oxidized soy isolate as a binder-adhesive component in coatings for paper and paperboard that contact dry food. The oxidized soy isolate is to have 50-70% of its cystine residues oxidized to cysteic acid. The action was taken in response to a petition filed by Ralston Purina Co. Details: *Federal Register*, Friday, Nov. 12, 1982, p. 51106; *Food Chemical News*, Nov. 15, 1982, p. 10.