

## "Lopid" okayed

Sweden has become the first country to approve Warner-Lambert Co.'s gemfibrozil "Lopid" for the prevention of coronary heart disease and for the treatment of high cholesterol.

The drug currently is available in 40 countries for the treatment of lipid disorders.

In addition, Warner-Lambert said, Spain has given supplemental approval for the use of gemfibrozil to prevent coronary disease in patients with lipid disorders.

The scientific basis for the drug's link with heart disease prevention was a study done in Helsinki, Finland, and reported in the Nov. 12, 1987, issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*. The five-year, 4,081-patient clinical trial found that gemfibrozil reduced the rate of fatal and nonfatal heart attack and sudden cardiac death by more than one-third in patients with hyperlipidemia.

## Palm oil inroads

Iran has lifted its decade-old ban on palm oil and has invited Malaysia to export palm oil to Iran, according to a report by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). USDA said the action follows a research study disputing the widely held belief in Iran that palm oil causes cancer.

Consumer tastes, however, are not expected to change quickly, USDA said, and Iran is not expected to change its vegetable-oil-buying pattern immediately. Typically, Iran purchases soybean and sunflowerseed oil.

Meanwhile, United Brands of Costa Rica is expected to export 12,000 metric tons of crude palm oil to Central America and Mexico during 1988. This will represent the first significant palm oil exports from Costa Rica and can be attributed in part to U.S. AID, Inter-American Development Bank and Commonwealth Development Corp. projects, according to USDA.

## Indian officers

The Solvent Extractors' Association of India has elected AOCS member H.P. Gupta of Kanchan Oil Industries Ltd., Calcutta, as its president for 1988-89.

Other officers are E.A. Kader of Liberty Oil Mills P. Ltd., Bombay, vice president; K.L. Ajoomal of Naraindas Bros., Bombay, secretary; and G.B. Chawla of Kamani Oil Industries Ltd., Bombay, treasurer.

## Sungene grant

The Sungene Technologies Corp. has been awarded a \$50,000, six-month grant from the National Science Foundation to develop a method to protect plants from diseases caused by bacteria.

Sungene will determine the effectiveness of a number of enzymes found in nonplant material, such as egg white, in destroying a variety of disease-causing bacteria in crop plants. These enzymes, called lysozymes, kill bacteria by dissolving cell walls.

Sungene scientists then hope to use genetic engineering tech-

niques to cause major crop plants to produce the bacteria-fighting enzymes. Lysozymes occur naturally in plants, but they generally are not effective in preventing disease.

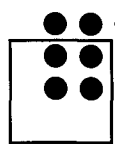
## Feed consultant

The National Renderers Association (NRA) is creating a position for a feed consultant for Asia to work with feed milling companies in such countries as India, Pakistan, Indonesia, China and the Philippines.

"The recognition that fat has a real place in feed exists, but getting people to do it, and do it right, is a big step," NRA spokesman Kent Brady said. He noted that currently, feedgrade fat generally is not being added to animal and poultry protein meals in this region although local manufacturers are aware of the benefits of such usage due to NRA promotion work since the 1950s.

"The addition of fat to feeds in those hot climate areas is essential to provide the energy for animals and poultry," he said.

The consultant, whose position will be funded by the U.S. Foreign Agricultural Service, will be based in Hong Kong. Brady said NRA hopes to hire someone by the end of September. The objective, he said, is to have that person meet with representatives of progressive feed plants and to outline the steps of incorporating the fats to the feed. This also will entail making recommendations on proper equipment and meeting with poultry and hog farmers to discuss any questions and problems with the feed.



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## Low-fat peanuts?

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) researchers have developed a "low-fat" peanut that now is being sold under the "Weight Watchers" label by Heinz Inc.

Low-fat peanuts are made by a commercial process that squeezes out about 50% of the oil from raw peanuts, USDA said, noting that raw peanuts will regain their shape after the squeezing process. The peanuts next are soaked in hot water, then roasted in oil for five minutes.

According to USDA, water steaming out of the peanuts prevents calories from the roasting oil from entering the peanuts. The result, USDA said, are crunchy peanuts with 50% less fat than normal peanuts.

## Rice bran plant

SNB Agriproducts of Thailand has contracted with Mitsubishi Kakoki Kaisha Ltd. of Japan to construct a continuous rice bran extraction plant in Thailand.

Intended plant capacity is estimated at 100 tons of rice bran per day. SNG is a joint venture of two Japanese firms, Nissho Iwai Co. and Boso Oil and Fat Co., with Soon Hah Sen of Thailand. Although Mitsubishi Kakoki has previously built plants in Singapore and Indonesia, this will be its first plant in Thailand.

## Vitamin E

Daiichi Engineering Co. of Japan has developed technology to separate and concentrate Vitamin E (alpha-tocopherol) from palm tree leaves, according to news reports in Japan.

The ion exchange fiber technique reportedly yields Vitamin E concentrate with more than 70% alpha-tocopherol. The resulting products can be used in pharmaceuticals, health foods, feed additives, antioxidants for edible oils and packaging film for food use.

## News briefs

AOCS member **Michael Pulliam** now is vice president of operations for Cambra Foods, Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada. He formerly was plant superintendent for A.E. Staley Mfg. Co., Decatur, Illinois.

**Dean A. Medford**, president and chief operating officer of **Ralston Purina International**, has been elected corporate vice president of **Ralston Purina Co.**

**Continental Grain Co. (Canada) Ltd.**, **Sumitomo Corp.** of Japan and **Spectrum Crop Development Corp.** of Ritzville, Washington, have formed a joint venture to market canola grown in the U.S. Pacific Northwest. Spectrum will procure the crop from growers and handlers in the Pacific Northwest, Continental will handle transportation from the Pacific Northwest to Japan and Sumitomo will process and market the crop in Japan.

**Alan R. Gould** has been named director of agricultural biotechnology and plant breeding for **Dow Chemical Co.**'s agricultural products department. This action unites the biotechnology efforts of Dow's central research with the biotechnology and plant breeding research of **United AgriSeeds**, a wholly owned subsidiary of Dow. Gould is vice president of research and development at **United AgriSeeds**.

AOCS member **John B. Woerfel** and his wife, Paula, of Tucson, Arizona, recently returned from New Delhi, India, where John served as a volunteer with the **International Executive Service Corps**. Woerfel, retired technical director of **Armour Food Oils Co.**, was recruited to assist **DCM Ltd.**—**Shriram Foods and Fertilizer Industries**, with operational and analytical work in an



## Technical center

Capital City Products Co. has broken ground for a 15,000-square-foot technical center in Columbus, Ohio. The center will be the home of the company's research, technical service and marketing staffs.

The two-story building will include space for office, laboratory, meeting and storage areas. Application research laboratories will be provided for shortenings and oils, confectionery fats and chemical specialties.

The facility is slated for completion in early 1989.

integrated edible-oil-processing plant. The project also upgraded the operations from batch process to continuous process, and from plant and frame filtration to pressure-leaf filtration for bleaching and nickel filtration.

Fuji Oil Co. of Japan has developed the technology to produce specialty fats via a bioreactor using lipase as a catalyst. The firm is applying the technology to produce

cocoa butter equivalents, with sunflowerseed and safflowerseed oils as the raw material rather than price-volatile shea oil and sal fat.

AOCS member **James Shigley**, professor emeritus of biochemistry at Penn State and a specialist in the study of lipids, was honored in July by Penn State's College of Science Alumni Society for "his 38 years of loyal service and devotion to the

College of Science and its students, and for his inspiring teaching."

AOCS member **Ragnar Ohlson**, secretary of the International Society for Fat Research, currently is employed by **KF Livsmedelspolitik** (the Swedish Coop Union and Wholesale Society). His address is KF Livsmedelspolitik, 301-031, Box 15200, S-10465 Stockholm, Sweden.

## From Washington

### FDA to rule on health claims

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is expected to complete work on a rule governing health claims by September. However, its publication may be delayed by officials in the Office of Management and Budget and the Department of Health and Human Services, according to F. Edward Scarbrough, deputy director of the Office of Nutrition and Food Sciences in FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition.

Such a rule, if approved, would allow companies to make health claims about their products. The Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO) wants FDA to establish guidelines for appropriate labeling and enforcement standards. AFDO members have urged FDA to write specific rules governing permissible wording for health claims, and some affiliates have suggested a preclearance requirement for all claims.

Meanwhile, the attorneys general of seven states have asked FDA to continue its "former practice of prohibiting all health claims on food labels." The letter to FDA was written by Iowa Attorney General Thomas J. Miller on behalf of himself and John Van de Kamp of California, Hubert H. Humphrey III of Minnesota, William L. Webster of Missouri, Robert Abrams of New York, Jim Mattox of Texas and Don Hanaway of Wisconsin.

The attorneys general said the abandonment of traditional FDA policy, "in the absence of either a compelling need or a change in the Food, Drug & Cosmetic Act, constitutes an unjustifiable end-run of the legislative process and is a disservice to the American consuming public." They expressed concern that FDA's proposed rule will hamper states' enforcement efforts against unfounded claims and will offer inadequate consumer protection. Details: *Food Chemical News*, June 27, 1988, pp. 3-5.

### Make quality more lucrative

Participants at a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) meeting on quality and competitiveness agreed that economic incentives from the U.S. market would be needed to improve oilseed quality.

During an oilseed workshop at the USDA meeting held June 29-July 1, 1988, producers, processors, researchers and exporters concurred that incentives might encourage the delivery of cleaner oilseeds to domestic and foreign markets. Participants, noting increased interest by end-users in protein and oil content of oilseeds, pointed out that technology is available to analyze protein and oil content in soybeans.

If the U.S. market used such technology from the first point of sale to the buyer, a quality assur-

ance program would need to be developed and operators trained to use the instruments, participants said. Researchers also must determine the moisture basis for reporting analytical results and develop a calibration system to ensure accurate and reproducible results.

Public perception, processed edible nuts and aquaculture were among the other workshop topics at the Agricultural Products Quality and Competitiveness Conference.

For further information about the oilseed workshop, contact W. Kirk Miller, Federal Grain Inspection Service, USDA, 1094 S. Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20250, telephone 202-382-0219.

### EPA establishes herbicide levels

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has established residue levels for the herbicide quizalofop ethyl on a number of raw agricultural products and food commodities.

The maximum residue level on raw soybeans and for soybean flour is 0.05 parts per million (ppm); the levels for soybean hulls, soybean meal and soybean soapstock are 0.02 ppm, 0.5 ppm and 1.0 ppm, respectively. Levels also were set for animal and dairy products. Details: *Federal Register*, June 22, 1988, pp. 23,386-23,387 and pp. 23,391-23,393.