

FEDERAL AND STATE REGULATIONS

Legislative accomplishments for first session of the 83rd Congress

PERHAPS one of the most important actions of the 83rd Congress concerning agriculture was the final passage of legislation to increase the wheat acreage allotment minimums. Early this spring it became apparent that the surplus of wheat held by the Commodity Credit Corp. would require a limitation of the acreage for 1954. Several bills were introduced in Congress to modify the existing legislation and increase the minimum acreage which is provided by the agricultural act.

The bill as finally passed became Public Law 117 and increased the minimum acreage for the 1954 crop from 55 to 62 million acres. Subsequently in the wheat referendum the farmers voted to accept the acreage allotments and marketing quotas for their next year's crop. The increase in the minimum was probably an important factor in getting the approval of the farm voters; under the previous act their acreage would have been cut about 30%.

International Wheat Agreement

Another action affecting the price of wheat was the ratification of the International Wheat Agreement. The wheat agreement is in the form of a treaty between the major wheat producers and importers of the world. Under the terms of this treaty the principal wheat producing countries and the principal wheat importing countries establish a maxi-

mum and minimum price of wheat for the wheat exporters and importers and guarantees of minimum purchase quotas for the importers. The basic purpose of the agreement is to stabilize the wheat price and supply on an international level. The producers are guaranteed that they will be able to sell a definite amount of wheat at a definite price. Importers are assured of adequate supplies.

The previous International Wheat Agreement was signed in 1949 by 46 countries. Four of the signatories for the 1949 treaty were wheat exporters: the United States, Canada, Australia, and France. The price established under that agreement was a maximum of \$1.80 per bushel and a minimum of \$1.20 per bushel. The wheat producing nations guarantee that they will produce enough wheat to satisfy the demands of the wheat importing nations and that they will have the wheat available at the stated prices.

The new agreement, which will run for three years, raises the price level for wheat to a \$2.05 maximum with a \$1.55 minimum. This is somewhat lower than the price originally advocated by the U. S. but it is also considerably above the levels sought by the British commonwealth. Great Britain, which had held out for a \$2.00 maximum price, refused to sign the agreement. Since Great Britain was originally allotted about one

third of the entire wheat quota this failure of the British to participate could impair the effectiveness of the treaty.

FDA Inspection

Legislation to grant the Food and Drug Administration inspectors the right to inspect plants ran into unforeseen difficulties before the bill was finally passed as Public Law 217. The bill was introduced to give the FDA inspectors the power to inspect food processing, drug, and cosmetic plants following the decision of the Supreme Court that under the existing law the FDA could only inspect if it had obtained the consent of the plant owner. There was general agreement among the legislators that the FDA inspectors should be allowed to enter plants to inspect for violations of safe practices, but there was considerable debate on the techniques to be followed by the FDA in these inspections. There were objections that the FDA inspectors should not be allowed to demand to see prescription books and processes which involved trade secrets. FDA spokesmen said that without the inspection rights the enforcement program would be almost meaningless. As finally passed the law gives the FDA the right to inspect factories and other facilities for the purpose of detecting violations of the Food and Drug Laws.

Since passage of the law administrators in the food and drug inspection agency have said that they will not instruct the inspectors to press the inspection rights to examination of process plans and other written material concerned with food and drug processing. However the inspection of prescription books in drugstores will be continued for it is an important means for detecting narcotic violators.

Wisconsin Establishes Standards For Cereals and Ice Cream

The food standards established by joint resolution of the Wisconsin legislature state standards of identity for wheat corn flour, ice cream, and canned vegetables. The wheat flour standards are similar to the federal Food and Drug standards. The enrichment of flour is optional, but when the flour is enriched it must meet standards of identity of the article enriched flour.

The ice cream standards allow the use of mono- and diglyceride emulsifiers and carbomethoxycellulose as well as other common emulsifiers. Synthetic sweeteners such as saccharin are not allowed.

Standards of identity similar to those of the Food and Drug Administration for canned vegetables were also approved.



How's the concentration from that new fermentation culture, Peters?