FDA and Commerce Department Issue Reports on PCBs

A draft statement on the environmental impact of the Food and Drug Administration's recent proposal to limit the use of polychlorinated biphenyls has been issued by the FDA pursuant to the National Environmental Protection Act of 1969. The document, entitled "Draft Environmental Impact Statement—Notice of Proposed Rule Making; Polychlorinated Biphenyls," is available from the FDA's public affairs office, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, Md. 20852.

A federal interdepartmental task force has issued a report, "Polychlorinated Biphenyls and the Environment," that recommends the discontinuance of all current uses of PCBs except in certain electrical equipment and notes that the sole domestic producer has voluntarily reduced production and limited distribution of the chemical to electrical equipment makers. The report indicates that PCBs are widely dispersed throughout the environment and that their presence in food may be attributable to environmental contamination, industrial accidents, and migration from food packaging. The task force report is available at $6.00 from the Department of Commerce, National Technical Information Service.

Quality Control Guidelines for Fishery Inspection Proposed

Quality control guidelines for use in the inspection, grading, and certification of fishery products have been proposed by the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration of the Department of Commerce (37 FEDERAL REGISTER 9328). The NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service operates a voluntary fishery inspection program. The Fisheries Service, states the proposal, intends to rely on quality control systems provided and operated by parties contracting to perform inspection services. The proposed "Guidelines for Development of Quality Control Systems" and "Guidelines for Assessment and Approval of Quality Control Systems" would assist those contractors in the development of such systems.

Irradiated Foods Study Published by Commerce Department

A study on the potential use of radiation processed foods for military rations, as part of a national program on food radiation, has been published by the Department of Commerce. The publication, "Potential Radiation Sterilized Military Subsistence Items—Cost-Benefits Analysis," includes discussions of the cost considerations involved in radiation processing of food and of industrial production capabilities necessary to meet the potential civilian market as well as military needs. The study is available at $1.25 per copy from the Department of Commerce.

Pending Legislation

Food labeling . . . Hearings are being conducted by the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee on a bill, H. R. 14641, that would require the disclosure of ingredients on food labels.

Pesticide control . . . A subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry has approved for full committee consideration, with amendments, the House-passed Federal Environmental Pesticide Control bill, H. R. 10729. The bill would grant the Environmental Protection Agency additional power to regulate the manufacture, distribution, and use of pesticides.

Personnel

FDA Deputy Commissioner . . . The Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Dr. Charles C. Edwards, has announced the resignation of Mr. James D. Grant as Deputy Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, effective May 31, 1972.

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