

## Crease-retaining Finish for Cottons Being Sought by USDA, Dry-cleaners

Methods of applying a crease-retaining finish to cotton garments with standard drycleaning equipment will be sought under a research contract recently negotiated by the U. S. Department of Agriculture with the National Institute of Drycleaning, Inc., Silver

Spring, Md.

The treatment was brought to its present stage of development as the result of cooperative research by the Department's Agricultural Research Service and such outside agencies as the National Cotton Council of America, the National Institute of Dry Cleaning, and certain resin manufacturers.

This contract project is part of the continuing program conducted by USDA's Southern Utilization Research and Development

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## Average Cow Production Tops 6,000 Pounds

Milk production per cow in 1956 averaged 6,000 pounds for the first time on record, according to the March 29 Dairy Situation report.

It also says that production per cow in the U. S. has increased 20 per cent in the last decade and will probably increase at least that much over the next 10 years.

Average production exceeded 5,000 pounds for the first time in 1947. In 1947, the range in level of production per cow was 2,390 pounds in Louisiana to 7,250 pounds in California.

In 1956, Louisiana still had the lowest average — 2,800 pounds, and California still had the highest — 8,600 pounds. For all the states, the range in percentage of increase was from five per cent in Alabama and Oregon to 37 per cent in Florida, although Ohio and Indiana were close runners up with a 35 per cent increase.

Division at New Orleans, La., to increase consumption of cotton through improved processing methods and development of cotton fabrics with special properties for specific uses.

Today's cottons with wrinkle-resistant finishes are well suited for simple garments but are not fully satisfactory for tailored ones. The finishes are always applied to the cottons as piece goods before they are made up into clothing. The treated fabrics resist both undesirable wrinkles and desirable pressed-in creases, making it difficult or impossible to crease or pleat the garment or to sew-flat seams or pockets on them.

The treatment now under development, which involves application of a resin finish to cottons, gives them crease-holding as well as wrinkle-resistant properties. The resin formulation used is a combination of a reactive-type resin (dimethylol cyclic ethylene urea) and acrylate thermoplast, two catalysts, a silicone emulsion, a softening agent, and water. The finish is not applied until after the garments to be treated have been made. Thus seams and pockets can be ironed flat, and pleats and creases can be permanently set where they are needed.

This resin treatment, which USDA researchers hope will prove practical for commercial application, has already been tested experimentally at the Department's New Orleans laboratory. The garment to be treated is first wet with a solution of the resin and other chemicals, and is then partially dried. The final step is curing, or setting the fabric into permanent creases or pleats with a hot flatiron. Once curing is complete, further pressings will not set new pleats or remove the old ones.

In the laboratory tests, swatch samples of cotton were treated and cured with ironed-in creases. They were then machine washed, rinsed, and ironed flat. No effort was made to preserve the creases, yet after 12 launderings they remained crisp and sharp.

The resin treatment was effective on several types and weights of cotton fabric, from delicate lawn to sturdy twill. Women's blouses and men's sports shirts and slacks retained creases after many launderings, needed little or no ironing, and were wrinkle-resistant during wearing. Treated garments were also found cooler and more comfortable to wear, because they needed no starch.

Although the new process looks very promising, further research is needed before it will be ready for commercial use. Under the contract with the National Drycleaning Institute, the Department hopes to perfect the method using commercial drycleaning equipment to apply the resin and cure the finish. In the future, drycleaners may be able to add permanent creases and wrinkle-resistance to cotton garments as easily as they now add water-repellance to raincoats.

## Poultry

PHILADELPHIA (USDA) — Processed poultry, ready-to-cook (ice packed) young chickens — unsettled. Liberal supplies were available from all producing areas. Selling competition was active. Demand was only fair.

Prices paid delivered warehouse, Philadelphia (cents per lb.)

Grade A & U.S. Grade A, 2-3 lb. 30-34, mostly 30-32.

Hens: Ready-to-cook (ice packed) about steady. Demand good. Supplies were adequate for immediate requirements.

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Receipts April 16 included other than turkeys: Maryland, 85,000 lbs., Delaware, 102,000 lbs., South Carolina, 25,000 lbs., North Carolina, 22,000 lbs., Virginia, 24,000, lbs.

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