

## Mushroom Production Up 10%

United States mushroom production during the year ended June 30, 1973, totaled 254 million pounds. This is 10 percent above the 1971-72 crop and 23 percent above the 1970-71 crop. Average yield at 2.48 pounds per square foot compares with the 1971-72 crop yield of 2.47 pounds and the

1970-71 yield of 2.36 pounds. Pennsylvania, with 146 million pounds, accounted for 57 percent of the Nation's production.

An estimated 102 million square feet of bed and tray area was used for mushroom production during July 1, 1972 - June 30, 1973, nine percent more

than the same period a year earlier and 17 percent more than in the 1970-71 period. First fillings accounted for 37 percent of the total area, second fillings 32 percent, and additional fillings 31 percent. In previous season, first fillings accounted for 37 percent, second fillings 33 percent, and additional fillings 30 percent. (Fillings for growers with continuous operations were prorated to first, second, and additional fillings.)

Growers received an average of 43.3 cents per pound, down 2.9 cents from the price received a year earlier. Value of production at \$110 million for the 1972-73 crop is up slightly from the previous years' value of \$107 million. Processors used 70 percent of the current mushroom production compared with 71 percent in 1971-72. Processing sales in 1972-73 averaged 38.0 cents per pound, down 3.5 cents from the previous period, while fresh market sales averaged 55.5 cents per pound, down 2.4 cents. Growers intend to increase production area for the 1973-74 season by 11 percent over the past season. If intentions materialize, the first fillings will account for 36 percent of the 114 million square feet, second fillings 31 percent, and additional fillings 33 percent.

## Drive to Control Salmonella Increased

Steps leading to what government officials said would greatly reduce Salmonella and other foodborne illnesses, were announced at a joint press conference of the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW).

In releasing the reports of internal task forces within each agency, USDA and HEW officials advocated:

- Expansion and coordination of an intensive consumer education campaign aimed at eliminating careless food handling practices in the home and food service establishments.

- Continuation of a cooperative federal-state-industry program coordinated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), to eliminate Salmonella from rendered animal by-products used in animal feeds.

- Modification of processing procedures and facilities in meat and poultry plants under USDA inspection to reduce bacterial cross-contamination of products and equipment.

- Intensified support of industry and USDA-financed research aimed at controlling and eliminating Salmonella throughout the food chain.

- Development by FDA of model ordinances governing sanitation and food handling in retail stores, food service institutions, and standards for the food transportation industry

Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter noted that it is impossible to totally eliminate Salmonella since it exists throughout our environment. Meat animals and birds are therefore a common source of Salmonella organisms. Carryover contamination from the live animal and bird to raw meat and poultry occurs with some frequency.

Several steps can be taken, however, and others can be developed through more research, to greatly reduce bacterial loads on animal and poultry carcasses, Mr. Yeutter said. This, combined with lowering the level of Salmonella organisms in animal feeds, and improved food handling practices at the consumer level will reduce Salmonella as a significant human health hazard.

Noting that improper handling of food at the retail level and in the home is a major source of Salmonella infection, Dr. Charles C. Edwards, HEW's assistant secretary for Health, emphasized the importance of a joint educational effort by USDA and HEW. "We are convinced that an effective consumer educational program can accomplish more than millions of dollars spent on additional government regulatory programs," Edwards said. He also explained the actions FDA is undertaking to develop uniform ordinances for state and local governmental

units, standards for the transportation industry, and the redirection of FDA's inspections resources.

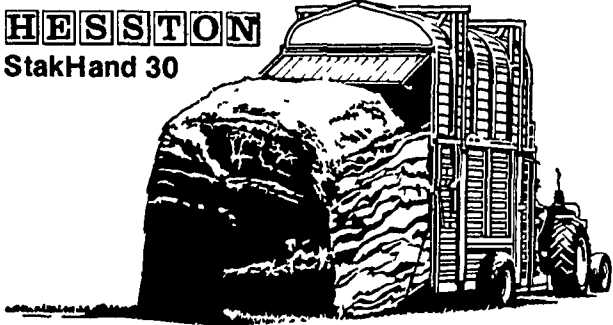
Mrs. Steorts urged consumers to take special precautions to "keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold," and to be extra careful about washing hands and cooking utensils in between handling various foods, to avoid cross-contamination.

Since Project HOPE assumed management of Sage Memorial Hospital at Ganado, Arizona, on the 16-million acre Navajo Reservation, nearly all positions at the hospital have been filled by qualified Indian personnel.

Two of Project HOPE's many teaching programs are conducted in the United States. The Laredo, Texas, program is designed for the Mexican-American community; the one at Ganado, Arizona, for the Mavajo Indians.

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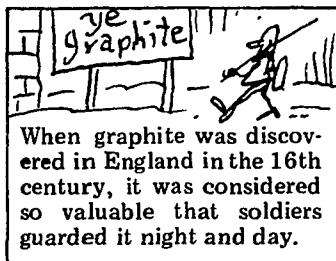


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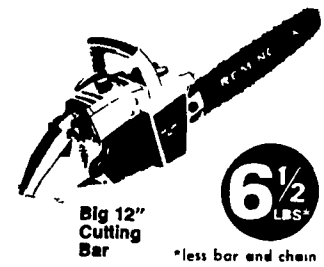
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