

Nutrition Labeling Proposed for Meat, Poultry Products

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) asked for public comments on a proposed voluntary nutrition labeling program for meat and poultry products.

The effective date for the USDA program would coincide with the Dec. 31, 1974 effective date established earlier this year by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for all other foods.

According to Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) officials, the proposal provides for voluntary participation on the part of meat and poultry processors. If a processor elects to participate in the program, he would conform to regulations governing the type and content of nutrition information and its placement on the consumer package.

APHIS officials stated that the voluntary program would be mandatory, however, for processors who make nutrition claims for

their products—such as "High in Protein."

Processors who add vitamins, minerals or protein to their products, would also come under the mandatory sections of the program proposed today. The only exception would be those processors who add nutrients to their products for specific technological reasons—such as the use of ascorbic acid (vitamin C) in cured meats to accelerate the curing process. In this case, the processor would have to list the ascorbic acid only in the ingredient statement on the label.

Under the proposal, nutrition information would be titled, "Nutrition Information Per Serving (or Portion)." The serving size, the number of servings in the package, the calories, protein, carbohydrate and fat content per serving would appear under this heading.

The amount of each nutrient listed would be accurately stated. On products which require cooking, the label would also show the nutrient levels remaining after cooking.

Immediately adjacent to the nutrition information, the processor would list the "Percentage of U. S. Recommended Daily Allowances, (U.S. RDA)" per serving for protein, vitamin A, vitamin C, thiamine, riboflavin, niacin, calcium and iron.

Under today's proposal, nutrition labels would be submitted by the processor to APHIS for approval. The processor would also have to submit a plan for an inplant quality control program to assure the product meets the nutritional values stated on the label.

Upon entering the nutrition labeling program, the processing plant will be under quality control monitoring by APHIS meat and poultry inspectors in addition to their regular inspection procedures.

FARM TRENDS

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2 percent from last year. If the expectations materialize, there will be 1.52 million acres planted to corn for all purposes and 415,000 acres seeded to oats.

Soybean plantings are expected to be 21 percent more than last year. If these intentions are carried out, there will be 70,000 acres in Pennsylvania planted to soybeans this year.

Barley plantings in the Commonwealth are expected to total 172,000 acres, the same as last year. Pennsylvania farmers have planted 30 percent more acres to winter wheat for harvest in 1974 than they planted for harvest in 1973. If current forecasts of yield materializes, the 1974 winter wheat crop will be 30 percent larger than the 1973 crop.

Based upon a January 1 survey of grower intentions in 34 states, the following crop acreages are expected to be planted for 1974:

Corn -- 77.4 million acres, 10 percent more than a year earlier. Soybeans -- 54.9 million acres, down 3.3 percent from the previous year and the first time since 1958 that acreage has not increased over the

previous year. Oats -- 18.8 million acres, down one percent from a year earlier. Barley -- 9.3 million acres, 15 percent less than in 1973. Sorghum -- 19.6 million acres, up one percent from 1973.

This special survey was made to obtain early information on farmers' plans to plant certain crops for harvest in 1974. The purpose of this report, published well in advance of actual spring seeding, is to assist producers and program planners in their plans for 1974. The survey covered 35 states. The comparisons with year earlier represent totals only for the 35 states included in the special January 1 survey.

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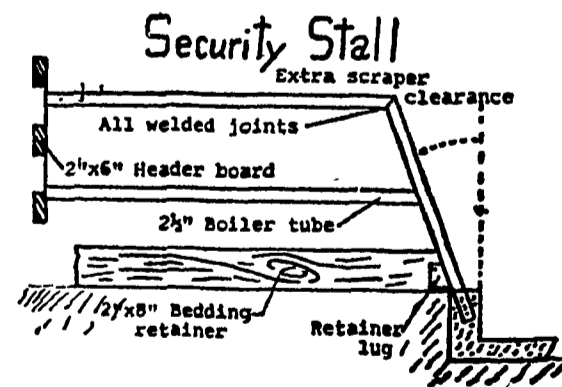
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