

Nutrition group critical of McGovern report

ROSEMONT, Ill. — A recent statement by the board of directors of the prestigious Society for Nutrition Education (SNE) takes specific exception to the "Dietary Goals for the United States," proposed by Senator McGovern's Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs. Similar to the stand by the American Medical

Association, SNE's statement says that the evidence on which the "goals" are based is "limited to epidemiological data and food disappearance studies which result in population needs rather than individual goals."

McGovern's report was published earlier this year and generated considerable

objections from the agricultural community.

Continuing its comment the SNE statement said: "It would be more beneficial to nutrition education if a group such as the Food and Nutrition Board, National Research Council - or an expert task force comprising representatives from the Food and Nutrition Board,

National Institutes of Health, and voluntary and professional organizations - could review, evaluate, document, and elaborate on the goals suggested by the staff of the Senate Select Committee. A scientifically supported presentation of current knowledge and opinion regarding diet and disease, indicating gaps and research needs, coming from such a group, would give stronger support and justification for programs to encourage modifications of dietary habits in line with the stated goals. Recommendations should represent achievable goals which are modifications rather than replacements of current practices.

"We believe some additions should be made to the goals as published. For example, obesity is a major health problem, one related to increased risk from several other diseases, e.g., hypertension. Obesity is directly related to food intake in excess of energy output needs. For this reason, we feel that general goals for calorie consumption are important.

"SNE would be glad to cooperate with the Senate Select Committee in refining the dietary goals so that they can begin to be realistically implemented in nutrition education programs."

Comments such as those of the AMA and SNE, and from many scientists and physicians, regarding the dietary "goals" reportedly will be published this Fall by the McGovern Committee. And, according to Dairy Industry Newsletter, some revisions of the report will be made "within a year." But, says DIN, "contrary to rumor, committee staff members stress that there are no plans to withdraw or

substantially alter the original recommendations that, among other things, Americans should eat foods low in saturated fat, cholesterol, salt and sugar."

In the original "goals" document last January, the so-called prudent diet, which the American Heart Association has been plugging for many years, was substantially adopted by the McGovern Committee staff.

Glucose aids forage digestion

MADISON, Wis. - Glucose, when infused into the fourth or true digestive stomach (abomasum) of cattle on a high forage diet, improves the utilization of acetic acid, says Dr. Henry F. Tyrrell, an animal scientist with USDA's Agricultural Research Service. More efficient utilization of acetic acid can mean increased weight gains in cattle on forage diets.

Previous research at the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center in Maryland showed that cattle utilize acetic acid, a major end product of digestion, more efficiently when it is part of a grain diet, than

when it is part of a forage diet. Cattle on forage diets absorb a higher proportion of energy as acetic acid, but apparently the acetic acid cannot be utilized as well, limiting the rate at which cattle gain weight. Scientists believe that some factor in grain improves acetic acid utilization, and they are now looking for that factor.

Tyrrell infused six yearling Holstein heifers on a high forage diet with either acetic acid or glucose. There was little utilization of metabolizable energy (ME) from the acetic acid, but 60 per cent of the ME of the glucose was used. When he infused the acetic acid and

glucose together, the ME from the mixture was used as efficiently as was glucose alone, indicating that it is the glucose that is necessary for efficient use of acetic acid. In fact, a small amount of glucose added to the diet produced changes similar to those that would have been produced from a large amount of grain.

Although glucose cannot be fed directly to cattle, cattle are able to synthesize it from substances called glucogenic precursors. Increasing the amount of glucogenic precursors in the diet may help cattle utilize acetic acid more efficiently.

More research is needed, but Tyrrell hopes that further studies will lead the way to improving the efficiency of forage diets for growing and finishing cattle.

Grain production surveyed

HARRISBURG - Pennsylvania's 1977 grain corn production is expected to be 10 per cent short of last year at 93.2 million bushels according to the Crop Reporting Service. Based on July 1 conditions, this is the result of 1,165,000 acres intended for grain harvest and a yield indicated at 80 bushels.

The commonwealth's winter wheat crop is still expected to total 7.02 million bushels, unchanged from the June estimate and 26 per cent below last year. This would be the state's lowest recorded wheat production.


Production of oats from the 350,000 acres for harvest is estimated at 15.8 million bushels or 14 per cent below last year. The indicated yield of 45 bushels is off five bushels from last year.

Barley production,

forecast at near seven million bushels, would be a ten per cent increase over 1976. Acres for harvest are down 2,000 at 145,000 but this is more than offset by a five bushel yield increase to 48 bushels.

Rye production as indicated at 392,000 bushels is eight per cent above last year due to a higher yield of 28 bushels.

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