

NEWS AND VIEWS

Weaning the Vegetarian Baby¹

Eggs and milk (if these can be taken) are good basic foods for the protein needs of the growing child but if not the child can be introduced gradually to a mixture of cereals, pulses, vegetables, fruits and seeds, all of which should be suitably prepared, ground and sieved to the right consistency.

A good 'mix' of amino acids can be obtained from complementary dishes, such as lentils and rice, baked beans and toast (or bread), peanut butter and toast. Useful weaning foods include curd and cottage cheeses, cooked and pounded egg yolk, cooked rice or millet with cooked butter beans, chickpeas, or lentils and vegetables cooked and liquidized.

Vitamin drops should be advised for vegetarian children until they are five years old and if the family is vegan, (strict vegetarians) supplements of vitamin B₁₂ are also essential. Many vegan babies are breastfed considerably longer than average and, although this is to be encouraged mixed feeding should start at around four months of age, as for non-vegetarian babies, the general principles being the same.

New Milk Foods for Infants²

The National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI) Karnal, has succeeded in developing a complete range of four formulae for spray dried milk foods for infants which are similar to breast milk when reconstituted with water. The new formulae which contain 12 per cent protein against 22 per cent of other commercial formulae, cater to various categories of infants from normal babies to abnormal babies having physiological disorders, and added that these milk foods have undergone successfully feeding trials on more than 500 infants. The compositional data of the formulae has been collected from the human milk from about 80 mothers who had normal infants, and about 300 mothers who had premature infants with physiological disorders. The lactational changes in transitional period from colostrum to mature milk have also been investigated. Among the four formulae, one is a special formula for babies born prematurely and underweight. The composition of the premature infants' mothers' milk differs from the milk of the mothers giving birth to normal babies. Some pre-mature babies are too weak to suckle at the breast and need to be tube fed orally, and in the face of it this formula is more important since no special feeds are available in India.

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1. *Digest*, a quarterly newsheet on nutritional matters dated February, 1984.
 2. *FTI Science Service*, Volume 3, Number 11, 1984.

Low Methoxyl Pectin from Limepeel³

CFTRI has standardized procedures for manufacture of low methoxyl pectin from lime peel, and the knowhow is ready for commercialisation. Low methoxyl pectin is a speciality pectin, useful in the preparation of jams and jellies having little or no sugar and with less solid content and should offer a variety of benefits to consumers with health and calorie consciousness.

Unlike all other methods or processes of low methoxyl pectin which require low temperature, the CFTRI process enables the manufacturer to prepare the product at room temperature ($25 \pm 20^\circ \text{C}$) using pectin extract or dry powder. Processing has been further simplified by preferably using ammonia in excess as the deesterifying agent to eliminate the difficulty involved in continuous addition of alkali.

The process is easily adaptable by commercial pectin manufacturing units.

Energy Conserving Technologies for the Post - Harvest System⁴

Dr. B.L. Amla, CFTRI Director, participated in the United Nations University (UNU) workshop on 'Energy conserving technologies for the post harvest system' and presented a paper on 'Development of energy saving technologies for food processing industry'.

Addressing the problems of the increasing shortage of energy the UNU workshop aimed at assessing and identifying technologies that can be made more energy efficient, dissemination of such technologies already existent, new technologies employing non-conventional sources of energy institutions where such R & D work can be undertaken and formation of such R & D as well as training programme.

In his paper he dealt with the importance of energy saving in food manufacturing processes especially in the developing countries with stress on the Indian scene. He further highlighted the dilemma faced by the planners in deciding about the criteria for promoting energy saving technologies since economics may not be always favourable for their large scale introduction. Though economic viability is critical in adopting energy saving practices, today's energy problem is sufficiently serious to consider energy consumption as the most important factor in the design of future processing system.

World Fish Catches in 1984 to be Higher than 1983⁵.

The volume of world cereal trade in 1984 is expected to rise to 206 million tons, 4 million tons more than the latest estimates for 1983-84 mainly because of higher import demand caused by poor harvest in the Soviet Union and in drought affected countries in Africa and the Near East, according to the

3. & 4. CFTRI News letter, Vol. 6 No. 4 dated July - August, 1984.

5. UN Weekly News letter, Vol. 35, No. 37, dated 26 October, 1984.

October issue of Food Outlook Report published by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

On the basis of the information provided by 'Globefish' - FAO market information system for fishery products world fish catches in 1984 are expected to be higher than in 1983 when the total stagnated at 76.4 million tons.

FAO's forecast of the 1984 world cereal production has been raised since last month by 7 million tons to 1,763 millions, 129 million tons or 8 per cent more than in 1983. Bumper harvests of wheat and barley in the European Economic Community (EEC) are the main cause of FAO's upward revision of the world cereal output. The good harvests in Europe are only partly offset by reduction in the estimates for North America and the USSR. The EEC production estimate has been raised by 11 million tons to nearly 144 million tons, 19 millions more than last year. The estimate for the Eastern European cereal harvests has also been raised by 4 million tons as compared to 85 million tons last year.

Women in Rural Areas Need to be Informed of their Rights⁶

Women in rural areas need to be informed and educated on their legal rights if they are to take advantage of

legislation enacted for their benefit and protection. This should be done through locally set up 'legal aid centres' which would help them to exercise their rights.

The situation of women in the rural environment, participants believed, was dependent on the achievement of quality, stability, development and peace.

In order to recognize, promote and reward women's contribution to both agricultural and non agricultural production in rural areas, greater attention should be given at the national level to research and information collection on these subjects. In addition, the experts agreed that more women should share in decision-making at all levels of planning. Prejudice-considered a major stumbling block, could be overcome with the provision of accurate information on woman's conditions, through increased levels of education and modifications in rigid attitudes on the role of women in society and in the family.

Access to credit should be extended to all women and they should be encouraged to learn how to seek credit or loan and to organize themselves into units to present greater credit worthiness to banks and other money lending bodies. When introducing the use of new technology to rural communities, extension services should not discriminate against women, it was recommended.

6. UN Weekly News letter, Vol. 35, No. 37, dated 26 October, 1984.