

TECHNOLOGY

Wool-Like Textile

➤ TWENTY MILLION pounds a year of a new synthetic textile fiber which looks, feels and behaves like wool is the production goal of two large British firms who have teamed up for the purpose.

This new synthetic, named Ardil by Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd., its manufacturers, is made from extracted peanut meal supplied by Lever Bros. & Unilever Limited as a by-product of their oil extraction operations. This peanut meal was formerly used as a cattle feed, but it will be far more valuable in its new role.

I.C.I. research chemists have discovered how to convert the proteins from the peanut meal into a synthetic fiber which, as it is protein in nature like wool itself, has much the same properties. By contrast, other synthetics such as rayon and nylon are more like cotton and their use is confined largely to clothing for outdoor and summer wear.

Ardil is like wool in its dyeing, moisture-absorbing, warmth and fire-resisting properties. In wool mixtures in the form of worsteds, woollens, hosiery, blankets, felts, carpets, hats and other products users will

have difficulty in distinguishing them from all-wool fabrics.

Ardil can be produced at a cost well below the current price of wool.

The new synthetic is expected to bolster Britain's rapidly dwindling stocks of raw wool.

Similar Fiber from Corn

Synthetic fiber made from peanut protein is not yet on the American market, but a similar fiber made from zein, a pure protein extracted from corn is in commercial production under the name of Vicara by the Virginia-Carolina Chemical Corporation, Richmond, Va.

A peanut fiber called Sarelon has been produced by the Southern Regional Research Laboratory of the U. S. Department of Agriculture in experimental lots and the information made available to industry.

Casein, the protein of milk, soybean protein and egg albumen can also be made into protein fiber of wool-like character. Chicken feathers yield keratin fibers which are said to compare favorably with fiber made from casein and soybean protein.

Science News Letter, September 29, 1951

PUBLIC HEALTH

For Health, Read Label

➤ THE SMART person reads the label, even the small print, when he buys foods, drugs, devices and cosmetics. He can protect both his health and his pocketbook by doing so. The label gives information required by law for protection of the purchaser.

The Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act sets the rules for labeling foods, drugs, and cosmetics that move from one state to another or are imported into the United States. It is the job of the Food and Drug Administration, operating under the Federal Security Agency, to make certain that such products are labeled according to these rules.

Today almost every processed food is packaged to protect it from dust and insects and to make it easier to handle. Since the buyer cannot examine the contents, he must depend upon a truthful label.

The enforcement of labeling regulations protects this country's large majority of honest manufacturers as well as consumers from unfair practices. In the label the manufacturer is required to tell you what is inside the package.

Labels must be truthful, they must not be misleading and they must be easy to understand. Drug labels must give adequate directions for use and unless the label is on a prescription drug it should tell what the drug is for.

For some foods, standards of identity, quality and fill of container have been set. These standards are set by order of the Federal Security Administrator, after public hearings at which manufacturers, representatives of consumers, home economists and nutrition experts, among others, discuss the proposed standards. One such standard, for example, requires that all fruit preserves and jellies contain 45 parts by weight of the fruit ingredient to 55 parts by weight of sugar.

The Food and Drug Administration has a booklet which tells simply and clearly what to look for on the label to protect yourself when you buy foods, drugs, cos-

metics and devices. You can get a copy of "Read The Label" from the Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., for 15 cents. (See p. 206.)

Science News Letter, September 29, 1951

MEDICINE

Pick Long-Lived Mother To Live to Ripe Age

➤ PICK A long-lived mother, if you want to live long. The length of Daddy's lifespan does not count as much.

This advice is based on genealogical findings reported by Dr. E. Jalavisto of the University of Helsinki, in Finland, to the Second International Gerontological Congress in St. Louis.

He studied data on 18,000 cases collected from Finnish and Swedish genealogists.

The length of life of fathers does not significantly increase the lifespan of daughters and even in sons the effect is less than that of the mother's longevity.

Father's age when the children are born also does not have any effect on the offspring's expectation of life, but the mother's does. Babies born when mother's age is high have a shorter life expectancy than those born to young mothers.

Science News Letter, September 29, 1951

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