

NUTRITION

Price Differential in Favor Of Whole Wheat Bread Urged

Government Subsidy and Extension of School Lunches To Rich and Poor Alike Urged To Raise Nutrition Level

ESTABLISHMENT of a price differential in favor of whole wheat bread through government subsidy supported by a tax on white bread is suggested by Prof. J. Murray Luck, of Stanford University, Calif. (*Science*, July 11.)

Extension of the existing school lunch program so that every child, rich and poor alike, will "receive in the schools one thoroughly good meal every day" is the second part of Prof. Luck's scheme for solving the nation's nutrition problem.

Whole wheat bread is hailed by all nutrition authorities for its high content of certain minerals and of the vitamins of the B group. Enriched bread contains more of these vital food elements than ordinary white bread, but enrichment with pure vitamins, Prof. Luck points out, fails to give the as yet undiscovered vitamins which many scientists believe exist in whole grains.

In spite of being told, day after day, that whole wheat bread is important for health, most people do not eat it for two reasons, Prof. Luck says. One reason is the strongly ingrained preference for white bread. The other is the fact that real whole wheat bread is more ex-

pensive than white bread. He cites English experience to show that a combination of lowered price and propaganda increases the consumption of articles of food.

When the price of a banana fell from four cents to two cents, approximately, in England, annual consumption increased from two and one-half million bunches to 20 million bunches. Between 1923 and 1935 the price of grapefruit fell 50% and the annual consumption increased from 1,200 tons to 59,500 tons.

"In the case of whole wheat bread," he points out, "we now have the propaganda but not the favorable price. It may be contended without any reservations that the creation of a sufficient price differential in favor of whole wheat bread would increase its consumption, but determination of the 'sufficient' differential is entirely a matter of trial.

"This program," he declares, "has two real merits: it is capable of immediate execution and it is conducive to the well-being of the low income groups who are now the greatest sufferers from malnutrition."

Science News Letter, July 26, 1941

cal value of the protein," Dr. Murlin stated.

The biological value of the protein indicates the amount digested and actually retained by the body, not merely the amount in the food eaten or even the amount digested, some of which may be lost from the body.

The young men on the diet squad ate a standard diet in which whole egg furnished most of the protein for six days, then ate the same diet with the protein furnished chiefly by a so-called "100% whole wheat bread for six days," then the egg diet for six days, then a diet with the peeled wheat bread, back to the egg diet, and so on. The whole period covered 76 days.

Taking egg protein as 100%, the three whole wheat products had biological values of 77.8% for the so-called 100% whole wheat bread; 79.6% for the peeled wheat bread; 81.6% for the Shredded Wheat Biscuits; and 75.3% for white bread. The differences between the white bread and the two highest whole wheat products were statistically significant. Differences with respect to utilization of starches and fat in the white and whole wheat breads were not significant.

Science News Letter, July 26, 1941

MEDICINE

Appendicitis Death Rate Reaches Record Low

THE death rate from appendicitis has reached a record low point, after a long and steady rise culminating nearly a decade ago, statisticians of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company report.

"In 1940," the report states, "the adjusted death rate from this cause was 8.9 per 100,000 (ages 1 to 74 years), the lowest in the experience of the Company, and represented a decline of nearly 40% from the high rate, 14.4 per 100,000 recorded in 1929. Moreover there is every indication the death rate in 1941 will again set a new low record."

Advances in surgical skill and, even more far-reaching, increased public understanding of the symptoms of the disease, of the need for prompt medical and surgical attention, and of the danger of laxatives in case of abdominal pain, are credited with reducing the appendicitis death toll.

Science News Letter, July 26, 1941

China is said to have had a great *zoological park* for many centuries from 1150 B.C., but it has none today.

NUTRITION

36-Day Supply of Calories Saved by Eating Peeled Wheat

BY eating whole wheat bread instead of white bread you get more proteins for tissue building and more minerals as well as more vitamins, Dr. John R. Murlin, of the University of Rochester, discovered as a result of diet studies with a squad of 10 young men as voluntary subjects. The studies were reported briefly to the National Nutrition Conference in Washington.

"If the peeled wheat bread were consumed by the average man of this diet squad instead of white bread for one year, on the calorie basis he would save enough total energy to supply him for

approximately 36 days," Dr. Murlin declared.

Peeled wheat bread is made from wheat prepared by the Earle flotation process which removes only the thin epidermis of the wheat berry constituting not more than 2% of the whole grain.

In addition to the 36-day calorie supply saved in a year of eating the peeled wheat bread, the man "would get 24/100 lb more calcium, 1.1 lb more phosphorus, and one-quarter of an ounce more iron, besides all the vitamins native to the wheat and a significantly higher biologi-