

smoked ham and later withdrew its approval of bacon. The Army, which has specialized in work on sterilizing doses for meat, is continuing its research. The AEC, whose program has been slowed down by budgetary limitations, is working closely with FDA in compiling the required data.

Two foods currently hold FDA approval, and several items have been approved abroad. The U. S. items, which are not yet commercialized, are potatoes irradiated to inhibit sprouting during storage and wheat and wheat flour irradiated for insect disinfestation. However, work is moving ahead on petitions seeking approval for low-dose radiation processing of fresh strawberries to reduce and control decay and rot, of papayas for quarantine disinfestation and delayed ripening, and of haddock and cod fillets for the extension of fresh market life by reduction of spoilage flora. So far AEC-sponsored long-term animal feeding studies in progress concerning wholesomeness and safety evaluations of irradiated strawberries and papayas show no adverse effects associated with the low-dose radiation processing.

Both the required shipping and the two-year animal feeding studies for strawberries will be completed in 1970. The petition for approval of irradiated strawberries will likely be submitted to FDA in the summer of 1970. Strawberries, by the way, have already been approved for market testing in the Netherlands.

The Department of Agriculture of the State of Hawaii is conducting shipping and packing studies of irradiated and unirradiated papayas for the AEC. Current studies to determine the effectiveness of radiation as a disinfestation agent for papayas are being conducted in cooperation with the Plant Quarantine Division of the U. S. Department of Agriculture in Hawaii. AEC-sponsored two-year animal feeding studies on papayas are scheduled to be completed in mid-1971. If the papaya petition, which AEC hopes to submit late in 1971, is approved by FDA, commercial irradiation of the fruit could begin as early as 1972.

Microbiological studies are now under way on haddock and cod fillets with particular attention to *Clostridium botulinum*, the bacterium which causes botulism food poisoning. Investigators want to confirm that radiation used to inhibit the growth of the normal spoilage organisms present in fish is also effective in controlling the growth of any botulinum organism in the fish. Two-year feeding studies on the haddock will likely begin in 1971 after the microbiological studies are completed.