

Effects of silt usage unknown Scientists study cottonseed flour

The Army Corps of Engineers wants to know what happens to potentially poisonous heavy metals such as mercury, zinc, lead and cadmium that accumulate in places like the Houston Ship Channel.

Heavy metals entering the water tend to end up in the bottom silt. The silt is often used in land fills, dumped into other underwater environments or used to fill marshes.

The Corps has awarded TAMU's Biology and Civil Engineering Departments a \$100,000 contract to

trace the route of these heavy metals.

"We want to know if it is suitable for fills and what it does to the environment where it's dropped," said Dr. Jerry Neff, a member of the investigating team.

"A large amount of the metal ends up in the sediments where metal concentrations may be several orders of magnitude higher than the surrounding water," Neff said.

"They can get even higher where man impinges upon the aquatic en-

vironment like the Corpus Christi and Houston Ship Channels."

The group will take samples of sediments all along the Texas coast and determine the concentrations of heavy metals in them. These samples will then be tested in various aquarium environments.

"We'll also use three types of water for the tests: estuarine like in bays, ocean and fresh water," Neff said. "This is because there is evidence that some of the metal pollutants behave differently in waters of

different salinity.

"For the studies we will use grass shrimp, which live on the sediment surface, a commonly occurring clam and two types of worm," he said. "Regardless of their exact position in the fresh water or marine food web, they represent the lowest levels in their habitats

"As a result, they would serve to transmit the accumulated metals to secondary consumers, which in turn may be eaten by humans," he said.

"We will expose the test animals to sediments containing the different levels of heavy metals and record their fate," Neff said. "We want to know if the animal is changing the sediment and/or is the sediment changing the animals and which of the heavy metal types are available to them."

At a point when the level of tissue contamination is known, the animals will be transferred to clean water to see how fast they release the heavy metals.

Flour made from cottonseed has long been known to be a high source of protein. It has also remained relatively untapped as a food source.

A Lubbock cooperative oil mill now has the capability to produce such flour. This development has prompted researchers at TAMU's Food Protein Research and Development Center to try and determine what kind of cotton, grown

in what season, in what area, yields the best food value.

James T. Lawhon, principal investigator for the project, received notice this week that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has provided \$126,000 for the study.

"Four varieties of cotton, planted side by side, in five locations across the state will be sampled for three years," Lawhon said. "Each year's production will be studied for variation to analyze its potential for food use and its suitability for processing with a liquid cyclone process."

The liquid cyclone process was developed by the USDA to produce a cottonseed product that is consumable by humans.

"This advantage of being able to extract a high percentage of oil and food should make cotton more advantageous as a money crop," said Dr. Russell Kohel of the USDA, who calls himself an "interested observer." "However, no real market has developed yet for the extra products."

The sites for the test plantings will be in the lower Rio Grande Valley, Corpus Christi, College Station, Lubbock and the high plains, El Paso and the irrigated west, Kohel said.

To improve the quality of cottonseed for human food, more information is needed regarding the influence of climate and genetic factors.

The team will make recommendations to the USDA on what the optimum conditions for production are in Texas.

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Calf Recipe

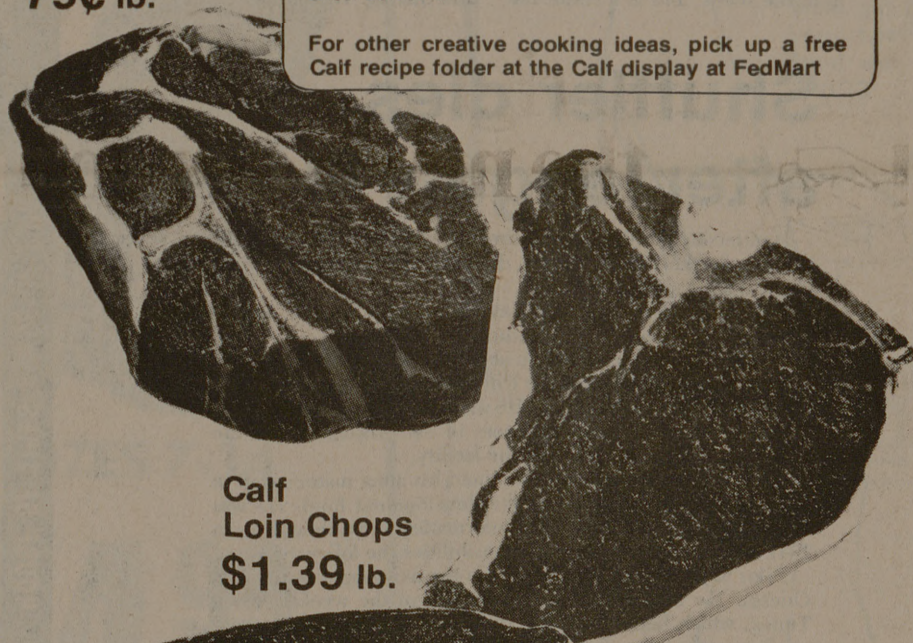
CALF SUPREME

1 1/2 lbs. calf steak (round or tip), 1/2" thick
1/3 cup butter
1/2 bay leaf
1/3 cup white wine

Cut calf steak in thin strips about 1" wide and 8" long. Roll in seasoned flour and tie each strip in a knot. Saute in butter until well browned. Add bay leaf. Cover and cook slowly for 20 minutes, turning occasionally. Add white wine and heat just to boiling. Season with salt and pepper to taste and serve at once. Serves 6.

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Rise Shave Cream 69¢

Cooperation as good as competition

After testing over 650 volunteers, a TAMU researcher says cooperation did not prove any more helpful in learning a task than did competition.

Dr. Linus Dowell, professor of health and physical education, reports that neither men nor women learned a series of experimental tasks better because of being in a cooperative or competitive learning environment.

Men did seem to learn the novel task more readily, he notes. Dowell explains the men may have been more challenged by the puzzle or may have had more experience in solving that type of task.

In the experiment, competitive and cooperative groups were asked to look at a booklet describing a "game board" and then describe the rules that would account for the movement of a piece pictured on the board.

"The question of cooperation versus competition is one that has interested educators and psychologists for years. Educators want to know what situation motivates the best performance from their students," Dowell said.

"Although many studies have been made, no conclusive evidence has been presented in favor of either. There is as much disagreement in the research as there is in individual opinions."

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