

Alaska's Old Stand by, Pilot Bread, Being Enriched by Co.

A food widely used in Alaska's outlying communities will soon have extra nutrition benefits through cooperative efforts of the manufacturer and the U.S. Public Health Service physicians and Public Health nutritionist serving with the Alaska Native Health Area.

The American Biscuit Co. in Tacoma, Wash., primary suppliers of Pilot Bread and related baked articles for Alaska, has begun to enrich its product with vitamins and minerals especially valuable to diets of Alaska's Natives.

Some nutrients being added are iron, calcium, thiamine, riboflavin and niacin.

Pilot Bread is popular in the bush areas particularly for several reasons. It is relatively inexpensive, has a long shelf life and requires no preparation.

The last advantage appeals to families at fish camps and other temporary locations where there are no ovens for bread baking or at times such as the fishing season when everyone is too busy to bake.

Drs. Carolyn V. and George Brown, a husband-wife team on the staff of Alaska Native Health Area, along with Beryl Bonehill, public health nurse, found from a study

made in villages on Kodiak Island that iron deficiency anemia was common among children there.

The anemia seemed related to a high incidence of respiratory infections leading to hospitalizations and deaths in children from birth to four years of age.

Similar iron deficiencies have been noted in other areas of the state and supplemental iron is widely prescribed, particularly for pregnant women.

Physicians recognize, however, that it is best when possible for people to get required minerals and vitamins in regular foods, natural or enriched. Thus having the Pilot Bread enriched will be a boon to all.

Miss Beryl G. Becker, a PHS nutritionist with ANHAO, worked with officials of American Biscuit Co. to establish levels of enrichment according to standards of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and Washington State Department of Agriculture.

Since beginning the project in early summer, the firm has offered to enrich its "Jersey Cream" in addition to the Pilot Bread.