

## FEDERAL AND STATE REGULATIONS

### Officials hear survey of fertilizer laws . . . Association president says Model Fertilizer Bill should be revised, not abandoned

THE PARALLEL DEVELOPMENT of fertilizer control activities and the fertilizer industry in the U. S. was reviewed by Parks A. Yeats, president of the Association of American Fertilizer Control Officials, in his address to the association in Washington Oct. 17.

He presented the history of the fertilizer industry in a review of fertilizer consumption figures, from 1 million tons in 1880 to 18 million tons in 1950, and this consumption figure is, apparently, still rising. With the continuing increase in fertilizer consumption the job of the control officials has also become bigger.

The AAFCO was formed originally to promote uniformity in fertilizer control laws. Before discussing methods the control officials should adopt to improve their work, Mr. Yeats reviewed the progress which has been made toward uniformity of regulations.

#### Uniformity of Fertilizer Laws

He presented the results of a survey of fertilizer control regulations in 48 states and Canada. Of the 49 returns on the survey 28 states reported that their laws were passed prior to 1948, the year the Model Fertilizer Bill was adopted by the AAFCO. New laws have been passed or amended since 1948 by 21 states, 17 of these are patterned after the Model bill. Of 36 officials who replied that their laws were not patterned after the Model bill, only 26 of them said they thought that their laws should be revised.

All the 49 respondents to the questionnaire said that their states required fertilizer registration, 45 require annual registration, while 4 are permanent.

There is however, no semblance of uniformity in the registration fees. In 17 states the fee is less than \$5.00; four charge between \$5 and \$10. Six states are between \$10 and \$25 and 13 states charge more than \$25.

On the question of inspection fees 42 states have them ranging from 1 to 50 cents per ton. In only 1 of these states is the fee collected by tags or stamps. Thirty-four states use tonnage reports for the collection. The seven remaining states use a combination of tags and reporting for collection of the fees.

Statistical information on fertilizer tonnage is published by 41 states, while eight states do not publish the information.

#### Revision of Model Fertilizer Bill Needed

Mr. Yeats said that in revising fertilizer laws to keep pace with the advances in fertilizer technology it would be inappropriate to abandon the Model Fertilizer Bill. Rather he said that the modifications necessary should be incorporated in the Model bill. And although the Model bill cannot be adopted by all states it can serve as a guide when fertilizer bills come up for revision.

Revisions of present laws and the Model law will probably be necessary to cover the recent development of exorbitant claims made by manufacturers of liquid fertilizers, mineral additives, and other specialty preparations such as soil conditioners.

He also suggested that in revising fertilizer control laws plans should be made to publish tonnage data either quarterly or semiannually. At present only 18 states do this. A good quarterly or semiannual tonnage report, according to Mr. Yeats, could be a justification for raising tonnage fees in states where the fee is less than 15 cents per ton.

He told the officials that they can increase their effectiveness in fertilizer control work by the adoption of a more adequate sampling and inspection program. According to the survey which he discussed there is a wide variation among the different states in the number of samples taken compared with the tonnage of fertilizer inspected. He also said that efforts should be made to use more rapid methods of analysis to speed samples through the laboratory.

The duties of fertilizer control officials extend beyond the sampling and analysis of samples, according to Mr. Yeats. For he said that they should not pass up opportunities to serve on groups to promote the more efficient use of fertilizer by farmers. The fertilizer control officials can cooperate with other agencies and groups to work for the over-all good of American agriculture.

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