

# BUSINESS AND FINANCE

## Supply position for superphosphates is deemed favorable . . . Potash producers expect a satisfactory year

ON THE WHOLE there appears to be a more confident feeling in fertilizer trade circles even though there are some unfavorable circumstances clouding the picture at the moment. One, of course, is the reduced level of farm income. Another is the tendency of some large tonnage farm chemicals to accumulate, such as ammonium sulfate.

We have also had a rise in stocks of superphosphate, but these supply gains are not unusual for either phosphate or nitrogen materials at this time of the year. Inventories have to be built up now to meet demands of the heavy shipping season in late winter and spring.

Superphosphate stocks on hand gained 5% during the month of August, still were 5% less than tonnage reported on hand one year previous. Production of normal, enriched, and concentrated grades actually declined some 2% during the January-August period to a total of 1,474,898 tons. This period takes in the active shipping months of the 1952-53 fertilizer year, and it is interesting to find that shipments for January-August were 2% higher.

### Stable Market Seen For Potassium Salts

Agricultural potash rules very steady and producers do not look for any change in prices over the agricultural year ending next June. In this connection, a leading producer calls attention to the fact that potash is one of our cheap commodities, and price stability is a feature of the long-term delivery contracts of the industry.

The same interest places current domestic production in the neighborhood of 1,800,000 tons  $K_2O$  with seven producers now supplying this essential fertilizer material. Five of these are located in the Carlsbad, N. M., area. Production for the calendar year 1953 may reflect the full capacity of one new producer at Carlsbad, Southeast Potash, whose plant attained full output toward the end of 1952.

There have been no further additions to potash recovery or refining capacity of the major companies, and full 1953 production of potassium salts may show a slight further increase over the 1,665,113 tons  $K_2O$  reported for 1952.

Imports, which were around 191,000 tons, same basis, continued this year but they have had no effect on domestic prices.

### Sales Prospects In 1954 Doubtful

Both fertilizer and pesticide industries are hopeful that drought conditions will be absent in farm areas over the coming year. These conditions cut into sales in 1952 and 1953, and now Washington press dispatches quoting unidentified scientists indicate that even worse drought conditions may be our lot in 1954. This time it might affect the entire North American continent.

"The industry should be forewarned," says the statement, "that the climatic cycle of one dry year of major seriousness every 23 years is just about complete."

There is not much to add to farm sales prospects at this time aside from noting that in September sales of "farm supplies" by wholesalers were down as much as 27% from September 1952. This, however, is based on reports from only 18 wholesalers. Inventories on the other hand were down as much as 20% from a year ago.

### Monsanto Sales Up 31%

Monsanto Chemical reports a 31% increase in sales for the third quarter of this year over those for the same period of 1952. Sales totaled \$82,747,915 for the third quarter and \$258,026,886 for the first nine months. The nine-month total is 36% above that for the nine months of 1952.

Net income after taxes for the first three quarters was \$19,687,960 or \$3.65 a share, compared with \$16,080,360 or \$2.97 a share for the similar period in 1952.

### Pittsburgh Coke's Sales At \$13.5 Million in 3rd Quarter

Pittsburgh Coke & Chemical had sales of \$13,501,000 for the third quarter, compared with the \$8,558,000 reported in the 1952 third quarter. Earnings after taxes were \$680,000 or 63 cents per share. In the comparable quarter of 1952, which was affected by the steel strike, earnings were \$430,000 or 35 cents a common share.

Total sales for the nine months were \$41,636,000, compared with the \$28,275,000 in the first three quarters of 1952. Earnings in the nine months' period were \$2,483,000, an increase of more than \$1 million over those reported in the similar period of 1952.

### Cyanamid's Sales for First Nine Months over \$287 Million

American Cyanamid has announced sales of approximately \$287,302,000 for the first nine months of this year, compared with \$271,734,000 for the first nine months of 1952. Earnings were \$21,228,000, against \$19,332,000 for the 1952 period. Earnings were equivalent to \$2.44 a common share, compared with \$2.23 for the 1952 period.

### Victor's Sales, Profits Up

Victor Chemical Works reports earnings of \$862,561 for the third quarter, equivalent to 48 cents a common share. In the similar quarter of 1952, earnings were \$671,657 or 36 cents a share.

For the first nine months of this year, earnings totaled \$2,494,528 or \$1.38 a share, compared with total for the first three quarters of 1952 of \$1,910,227 or \$1.00 a share.

### Pfizer Earnings Up 32%

Chas. Pfizer & Co., Inc., announces sales of \$90,929,800 for the first three quarters of 1953, an increase of 12.7% over the like period of 1952 when sales were \$80,667,679. Net profit after taxes also was higher—at \$10,772,615, an increase of 32% over the 1952 profits of \$10,772,615 for the first nine months. Earnings per share of common stock increased from the \$1.55 reported for the first three quarters of 1952 to \$2.09 for the three quarters of 1953.

### Union Carbide's Sales Hit New High for First Nine Months

Record high sales of \$782,865,344 are reported by Union Carbide and Carbon for the first three quarters of this year. The total represents an increase of 14% over the \$684,600,779 reported for the similar period in 1952.

Net income after taxes amounted to \$78,897,595 or \$2.72 a common share. For the first three quarters of 1952, net was \$70,739,620 or \$2.45 a share.

Third quarter sales were \$254,710,016, compared with \$231,725,385 in the 1952 third quarter. Sales for the second quarter of this year were \$267,459,224.