

Ag and Food NEWSLETTER

Outside Storage

TEMPORARY OUTSIDE STORAGE of fertilizer is being tried by Potash Co. of America at its refinery in Carlsbad. The dry climate at Carlsbad and the anticaking properties of the KCl produced by the company from the Carlsbad potash encouraged company to believe that permanent type warehouses are not necessary for temporary storage. Results to date are encouraging. A large area adjacent to the existing warehouse has been leveled and paved with asphalt. Produce is conveyed to open air storage area by enclosed belt conveyor. When completed, pile is covered by canvas. Company says that tests to date indicate that the product has not been contaminated in any way and shows no caking or lump formation. Full success of the experiment will not be determined till the entire pile has been removed and testing program completed.

New Process In Action

AMMONIUM PHOSPHATE SULFATE, produced by Stauffer, at Tacoma, is going to northwest farmers this week. Plant is first in the U. S. to use the Rumanca process, Italian development to which Stauffer has exclusive U. S. rights (AG AND FOOD, April 1, 1953, page 3). Unique feature is that manufactured material bypasses storage and curing normally required of ammoniated superphosphate; product is dry pelletized, and ready to ship.

More Combinations

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF GOOD results from application of fertilizer-herbicide-wetting agent combinations to cornfields, recently reported (AG AND FOOD, Jan. 20, page 54) is leading to more than experiment. We are told that plans already are in action to distribute 2,4-D low volatile ester and wetting agent along with ammonium nitrate solutions produced by Nitrogen Division of Allied. Mixing is done by the farmer just before application, apparently without major problems. Wetting agent, it is reported, improves results. Not only does 2,4-D ester handle broadleaf weeds, but nitrogen salt solution in postemergence spraying, knocks out grasses.

The Way Is Up

LAST YEAR AGAIN BEAT previous records in fertilizer consumption according to the preliminary report of the USDA. The increase was 711,000 tons, or about 3.2% over the 1951-52 season. Increase in commercial mixtures, 2.8%; materials containing primary nutrients for direct use were up 3.1%; secondary and minor element materials were 10.8% above last year. While consumption generally was a little short of last year's USDA estimates of supply, the difference appears not to be considered serious by the fertilizer industry. Weakest spots were ammonium sulfate and potash.

British Rationing Ends

RATIONING OF BUTTER, MARGARINE, COOKING FATS, AND CHEESE in effect for 13 years is scheduled to end in England May 8. Branded margarine will be offered the following day. Producers expect to market two grades. Industry spokesmen claim that both will embody considerable improvement over the government product which the British have been getting on their ration since 1940. Meat rationing continues but this final control is expected to go off by midsummer.

Sardines Short

ALARMED OVER THE DECREASING sardine catch, the California Department of Fish and Game has asked the Governor to consider special legislation to stop sardine fishing completely. Sardines have been falling off in California for past 15 years. Shortage is believed due to a combination of overfishing and poor climatic conditions in ocean for fish. Sardine industry completely shut down in Northwest in 1945-46, and more recently in Monterey and San Francisco areas. This year's catch, about 2000 tons, contrasted to 750,000 in past good years.

Open Sesame

THE FIRST COMMERCIAL SESAME crop in the U. S. has just been harvested in Texas. Growers believe they have a potential source of a superior vegetable oil. However, big problem seems to be getting financial backing. Advantages of sesame oil: much longer shelf life than many vegetable oils, meal; residue from oil extraction has a higher protein content than cottonseed cake. West Coast vegetable oil processors are eying sesame but think it will be while before it becomes commercially important. Suggestions are being made that with a sufficient tonnage production to put it into competitive importance, it might be a profitable replacement, in proper climatic regions, for some of the present marginal crops.