

Ag and Food NEWSLETTER

Fair Trading Of Sulfate

SHELL CHEMICAL reduced the price of its ammonium sulfate late in November and at same time "fair traded" the product in its marketing area, Arizona, Oregon, Nevada, and California. Fair trading of fertilizer materials has few precedents—du Pont's urea ("NuGreen") and Chilean sodium nitrate being among them. Shell supplies well over half of sulfate in western states. Indications are that competitors will meet the price reduction but will not fair trade, feeling that such a process will not be effective considering the numerous producers.

Sulfate Prices

AMMONIUM SULFATE prices on West Coast have been out of line in view of New York trade circles—even after allowance for freight cost difference (California buyers have been allowed up to \$5.92 per ton). However, western suppliers are quick to point out factors that justify higher prices—in addition to greater distances, plants are farther from water shipping and there is limited production from coke ovens, availability of which is big factor in controlling price in East and South.

Brea and Anhydrous

BREA CHEMICALS, which has placed major emphasis in past on ammonia application "via the aqua route" is now planning to supply anhydrous ammonia to western farmers. Ammo-grow Division of Specialty Oil Products (part of Calor Gas Co., largest contract purchaser and marketer of LPG in 11 western states) has been established to market and distribute that part of Brea's production which does not go into aqua and ammonium phosphate solutions.

Market Dovetail

BREA previously sold a limited part of its ammonia as anhydrous but had set up no distribution program, is now apparently shooting for an anhydrous market currently reached by nonwestern producers such as Phillips. Ammo-grow, which will promote, sell, transport, and store anhydrous, evidently plans to get a fair portion of Brea's output (235 tons per day) as it has a fleet of 100 ammonium railroad tank cars suitable for anhydrous. Fertilizer and LPG business will dovetail nicely, anhydrous demand picking up early in the year as LPG demand drops.

Citrus Pulp Feed

AMMONIATED, MOLASSES-SPRAYED CITRUS pulp, for cattle feed will be produced in substantial quantity in Florida during the next year. Ammoniation is intended to raise the normally low nitrogen content of molasses treated pulp, which has been used as feed for a dozen years and has seen more and more intensive use during the past four years. Major problem with ammoniated product is to make it palatable consistently on a commercial scale. Profitable disposal of pulp has become a critical factor in highly competitive citrus juice and concentrate business.

Consolidation Approved

FINAL APPROVAL of the proposed consolidation of the American Plant Food Council and the National Fertilizer Association was obtained at a special meeting of the APFC in Washington Dec. 1. Approval by members of the APFC was final step necessary for bringing the two fertilizer trade associations together. The new organization to be formed of members of both NFA and APFC will be the National Plant Food Institute which will formally come into existence in July 1955. A 36-member board of directors has been named for the new organization.

Rice Drying

GAS STORAGE technique for preservation of rough rice to cut down drying difficulties at harvest time, was presented before the recent ACS Southwest Regional Meeting. Small scale experiments with carbon dioxide and ethylene oxide already look good, but field tests are still needed. Rough rice after six months storage at room temperature remained in very good condition, showing no evidence of mold development or other undesirable changes and tasted quite normal after cooking. Process reported by S. A. Kaloyereas, LSU, may also prove beneficial in the preservation of vitamins in rice.