

Business Newsletter...

MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS

Stauffer and Victor will merge, if stockholders approve, and there is little doubt they will. Stauffer, the surviving company, will exchange one share of its stock for each Victor share outstanding. Victor's operations will continue intact as the Victor Chemical Division of Stauffer. Rothe Weigel, now president of Victor, will be president and general manager of the new division. Three members of Victor's board will be taken into Stauffer's board. Sales of the combined companies are expected to exceed \$225 million this year.

Baugh & Sons Co. has purchased the inventory and trade names of Dixon Chemical's I. P. Thomas Division. Land and manufacturing facilities were not included, but the contract includes a provision for Baugh to buy substantial quantities of sulfuric acid for an "extended period of years." Dixon will no longer be in the fertilizer business, which it says is incompatible with plans for expansion into heavy and fine chemicals.

Cenco Instruments has acquired Soiltest, Inc., a manufacturer of testing apparatus for agriculture and a number of other fields. Cenco paid Soiltest's owner 18,000 shares of Cenco stock and an undisclosed amount of cash.

NEW CONSTRUCTION

Construction is under way on Sun0lin's \$8-million urea plant at North Claymont, Del. Expected completion: early next spring. Its 73,000 tons of urea per year will be produced in five grades: prills for fertilizer and for industrial uses; a special cattle-feed grade; and high-purity crystalline products for leaf sprays and industrial uses. In addition to Eastern seaboard markets, company expects to supply rice and cotton belts along the Gulf Coast, and South American plantations, on a competitive basis.

Victor Chemical will build a "heavy tonnage" plant in Chicago that will produce bulk chemicals for agriculture and industry. First unit will be a phosphoric acid plant, which is to be finished in time for the 1960 liquid plant food market.

Dow Chemical will build a new agricultural chemical research center at Midland. When completed late next summer, it will consolidate various agricultural chemical research functions now scattered among various laboratories at Midland, and complement research facilities at Seal Beach, Calif., and Freeport, Tex. Single story building will provide 50,000 sq. feet of lab and office space, and will be surrounded by 110 acres suitable for small-scale field plot and animal research work. Greenhouses and service buildings will also be erected at the center.

Virginia-Carolina broke ground last month for an "ultra-modern" fertilizer plant at Jasonville, Ind. It will produce all the analyses of semigranular fertilizers needed by farms in southwestern Indiana and southeastern Illinois. Facilities will be provided for service to both bag and bulk customers.

Hooker Chemical will replace its phosphoric acid plant at Jeffersonville, Ind. New plant will provide increased tonnage on a more efficient basis.

A \$17-million anhydrous ammonia plant will be built at Maitland, Ont., by Sogemines, Ltd., a Canadian affiliate of Societe General de Belgique. Construction begins this summer, with completion scheduled for mid-1961. Plant will also produce hydrogen, ammonium nitrate, and nitrogen solutions. Pipeline will carry ammonia and hydrogen to Du Pont of Canada's plant at Maitland, which had been getting these raw materials from more distant points.

Florida Nitrogen awarded the contract for its limed ammonium nitrate plant at Tampa to D. M. Weatherly Co. Product will be granular.

Coastal Chemical's multipurpose granulating unit at Pascagoula, Miss., has been completed. It uses the D. M. Weatherly process. Plant also makes triple super and ammonium phosphates.

American Agricultural Chemical Co. will put up a \$750,000 contact sulfuric acid plant at Cairo, Ohio. When completed next March, it will increase the company's sulfuric acid capacity by about 10%. Output will be used primarily for firm's own fertilizers. AAC has a contact plant at Bay City, and 18 chamber-process plants at other locations.

FOOD ADDITIVES LAW COMPLIANCE

Up to June 30, FDA had received requests to clear 26 food additives under the new law. With more than 1000 additives now in use and only several hundred expected to be designated safe without further testing, FDA fears that a rash of petitions may be submitted near the March 1960 deadline, swamping its experts. Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare Flemming has urged industry to submit its petitions promptly to prevent temporary banning of additives at deadline time.

John L. Harvey, deputy commissioner of FDA, has urged chemical manufacturers whose products are used in food processing to take a close look at their labels. Food processors, he says, must know more than the trade name of an additive; they must know its status under the law and its exact composition. Labels on the additives do not always give sufficient information.

The subject of milk-carton wax and cancer is in the news again. Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare Flemming recently stated that no indication of a health hazard has been found so far. He did admit that a known carcinogen, 1,2,5,6-dibenzanthracene, was found in minute amounts in one of the waxes formerly used on milk cartons. FDA and Public Health Service are both studying these waxes. FDA says it has no present basis under the law for action against the wax.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Ansul Chemical has increased from 55 to 75 the percentage of active ingredient in its cacodylic acid herbicide. Its trade name has been changed from Arsan to Ansar. Tests indicate Ansar will be useful in renovating pasture and sod, with apparent lack of residual activity.

Montrose Chemical Corp. of California reports that its DDT production has hit a new high.

Federal Housing Administration has listed aldrin as a preconstruction treatment for protecting new homes against termites.

Climax Molybdenum reports that some 229,000 acres have been planted with Moly-Gro-treated seed, an increase of 120% over the 103,000 acres treated with other forms of molybdenum in 1958.

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General Mills has reduced the price of L-glutamine. New price: \$75 per kilogram in 500-kilogram lots, with substantially lower prices at commercial volumes. General Mills says price reduction climaxes a recent study of processing techniques.

USDA believes Hall scale has been wiped out in the U.S., unless continuing inspections turn up live specimens during the next 12 months. No Hall scale has been found since 1957, when last trees known to be infested were given a final fumigating. The pest has been a threat to commercial orchard and ornamental plantings since 1934; its eradication has been a tedious, undramatic campaign of over 15 years' duration. Only completely effective weapons have been destruction of infested trees and fumigation. If no live specimens turn up, USDA says it will still be 1960 before eradication can be considered certain.

Exploratory work with Trolene (Dow's cattle grubicide) administered via feed looks promising. Best results were obtained when total dose was divided and fed over a seven-day period, to prevent palatability problems. Trolene is now administered by bolus.

SCHOLARSHIP HONORS LATE C. C. ALEXANDER

A scholarship fund for entomology students at Purdue University has been established in memory of C. C. Alexander, Geigy research manager who died in an airplane accident on May 12. The scholarship was initiated at the suggestion of many of Mr. Alexander's friends both within and without the chemical industry. Contributions may be made directly to the C. C. Alexander Memorial Scholarship Fund, Purdue Alumni Scholarship Foundation, Lafayette, Ind.

MEETINGS

Canadian Fertilizer Association, Bigwin Inn, Lake of Bays, Muskoka, Ont., Aug. 18-22.

Symposium on Magnesium in Agriculture, West Virginia University, Medical Center, Morgantown, Sept. 3 and 4.

Fertilizer Salesmen's School, North Carolina State College, Raleigh, Sept. 3 and 4.

Canadian Agricultural Chemicals Association, Chateau Frontenac, Quebec City, Sept. 20-23.

American Oil Chemists' Society, Los Angeles, Calif., Sept. 28-30.

Symposium on Insect Resistance to Insecticides (sponsored by National Agricultural Chemicals Association and Entomological Society of America), Washington, D. C., third week in October.

Fertilizer Industry Round Table, Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D.C., Nov. 4-6.

Joint Western Canadian and North Central Weed Control Conference, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Dec. 8-10.

International Congress on Nutrition, Washington, D. C., Sept. 1-7, 1960.



- Sea lamprey, menace to Great Lakes fish, yields to chemical control (page 529).
- Climate control chambers aid agricultural chemical research (page 530).
- Grasslands—next frontier for fertilizer to conquer (page 534).

Research Newsletter . . .

PEST CONTROL EXPERTS TOURING U.S.S.R.

A group of pest control experts left on July 8 for a tour of Russia. Purpose is to collect technical information on biological control of pests. On the team are H. L. Haller, L. F. Curl, T. B. Davich, P. W. Oman, all of USDA, and H. M. Harris of Iowa State, Carl B. Huffaker of the University of California, and John B. Osmun of Purdue. They are to visit scientific institutions and agricultural areas, with an itinerary that includes Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Dnepropetrovsk, Krasnodar, Piatigorsk, Saratov, Baku, Tashkent, Alma Ata, and Omsk.

NEW ANGLES FOR BIOLOGICAL CONTROL

German entomologists are breeding a new subspecies of wood ants for use in pest control. The new species will have a high reproductive rate, will live on good terms with other colonies of their own species, and will kill other insect pests. According to the New York Times, this work is being done at the University of Wuerzburg in South Germany by Prof. Karl Gosswald.

The imported fire ant's sting may be used against it. According to Edward P. Wilson of Harvard, worker ants leave a trail of venom to guide other ants in the colony out foraging for food. He was able to direct foraging workers along artificial trails of freshly extracted venom. Technique could be used to lure ants to death traps.

GROWTH REGULATORS TRAVEL FROM PLANT TO PLANT

USDA scientists are testing three plant growth regulators that exude from roots of treated plants in quantities sufficient to be reabsorbed by nearby plants. They are meta-chloro, meta-fluoro, and para-fluoro, all halogenated forms of alpha-methoxyphenylacetic acid (MOPA). Another relative of MOPA, mandelic acid, has no growth-regulating effect, nor is it exuded from roots, although it is systemic. USDA scientists conclude from this that translocation property of compounds is independent of their growth regulating property, and that it may be possible to develop systemic chemicals of many different kinds to serve a variety of purposes.

MAGNESIUM DEFICIENCY

Prolonged dietary deficiency in magnesium causes calcium to deposit in the large arteries, muscles, and heart of dairy calves, say J. William Thomas and Mitsuo Okamoto, USDA dairy nutritionists. They believe it takes four months of just-below-normal magnesium intake to cause calcification. Most diets fed growing calves contain enough magnesium, but the amount of magnesium in the diet is not the only factor regulating their magnesium utilization. Work now in progress indicates the calcium-phosphorus-magnesium ratio in feeds consumed may be important in determining the most effective use of magnesium by calves.



- Double phenoxy herbicides look promising for mesquite controls (page 551).
- Colorimetric method determines residue of Dyrene fungicide (page 558).
- Magnesium ammonium phosphate through acidulation of olivine and rock phosphate (page 566).