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SDA considers industry's 'Changing Profile'

The Soap and Detergent Association marked the 10th anniversary of its Detergents-In Depth series in Chicago this spring with its 1984 symposium, "The Changing Profile." Almost 200 people, drawn evenly from the industry, education and extension services, attended the symposium on April 26 and 27 to hear speakers discuss change in the industry, its products and the consumer.

Steve Collesano, program director at the American Council of Life Insurance and author of the annual report, *Monitoring Attitudes of the Public*, set the keynote in his remarks on a changing social environment that is having a strong impact on the soaps and detergents market. The "typical" American consumers—the family of four—are now in a minority; only 7% of American families now fit this model. In 1984, Collesano said, the single household is the norm, the majority of married women and mothers work outside the home, and gains in life expectancy have meant an increasing senior citizen population that lives on a limited income. The baby boom generation has grown to be a formidable group of consumers, which makes up a patchwork society, tending to be diverse in its values but generally tolerant, highly educated, supportive of change and optimistic about its financial future.

"Household Cleaning Products and the Consumer" was presented by Susan Milligan, consultant at Charles H. Kline and Co., Inc., the international consulting firm specializing in technological appraisals for the chemical industries. She pointed out that social changes have had important implications for the questions of who cleans, who buys the cleaner, and what time and funds are available? Most consumers now are looking for time-saving, good-value cleaning products. The market response of the soap and detergent industry has been to develop products such as detergents with added bleaches and softeners, one-step floor cleaners and multifunctional products to clean windows, floors and countertops. Formulations have improved to cut down on "elbow-grease" and concentrated products will be dominant by the year 2000, Milligan said. Specialized cleaning products, such as oven cleaners, polishes and waxes, will see declining sales, she predicted, and nonbranded products will become much more important in future recessionary times.

William Martin, Executive Director of the American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists, lamented the "tidal wave" of foreign textile imports that are washing away the productivity of textiles in the United States. Last year, America, "the most efficient textile-producing nation in the world," imported 32 yards of material for each man, woman and child, he said. Martin urged a restructuring of trade agreements relating to textiles and introduced a new logo for clothing that declares "crafted with pride in U.S.A."

The concept of the cleaning equation: cleaning chemistry = energy = time, was introduced by Dr. Albert Hidalgo in a review of worldwide laundry detergents. In North America, the washing machine is usually top-loading with a 5-to-15-minute cycle, taking a typical washload of colored cottons and synthetics. Warm-water washing, with a cold rinse, has replaced hot water as the norm. Product densities

have increased so that most laundry loads now only require 1 cup as opposed to 1½ or 2 cups of detergent. Liquid detergents (convenient to store, carry and use) are common, as well as bleaches and softeners. About 45% of households have dryers.

In Europe, Hidalgo said, garments tend to be more soiled because of more wear between washes. Machines use hot water and are typically top-loading with a revolving drum to conserve energy and water. The total cycle is usually one hour. Laundry detergents contain foam suppressants because the machines use a tumbling action and clothes are usually line dried. In Japan, Hidalgo reported, small top-loading machines use lukewarm water drawn from the family bath. In Malaysia, 10% of the population has washing machines and, in Thailand, 1%. Laundry bars, brushes and river water are the most common form of laundering in Asia where garments are presoaked, washed with high-sudsing powders and sun-dried. Hidalgo pointed out that today's most popular detergent worldwide is still the heavy-duty laundry detergent with surfactant and builder as the main ingredients.

New trends affecting appliances were the subject of "Coming Clean," a talk by Charles Madanick of General Electric, who told registrants that Americans now tend to buy compact, energy-saving appliances which are easy to use and maintain. More men and children are now using the machines, which handle, on average, 7 to 8 wash loads per week. The biggest problems, he said, are still overloading and not pretreating the laundry.

About 45% of households in America now have automatic dishwashers, according to Sharon Mitchell, from the Packaged Soap and Detergent Division of Procter and Gamble. Automatic dishwashing detergents contain builders (phosphates are still the most effective, although their use is restricted in some areas), surfactants, chlorine bleach, material protection ingredients (silicates) and suds control agents. Mitchell said that changing consumer habits—specifically a tendency to wash dishes less frequently, less attention to proper technique because of demanding lifestyles, and energy and economy concerns will all affect automatic dishwasher detergent formulations.

Extension specialists expressed concerns that carbonates are being used extensively in detergent formulations and that the lower level of phosphates causes fabrics to look dingy. Speakers unanimously agreed that phosphates are the best detergent builders, although environmental concerns have restricted their use in many states. Dr. Hidalgo commented that, in such areas, heavy-duty liquids provide better performance than powder detergents with no phosphates. Judith Smeltzer, in a talk on legislation and regulation affecting the soap and detergent industry, said that phosphates could be removed effectively at the sewage level, rather than from detergents. She says that the question is undergoing a serious review in North America and Europe.

Smeltzer pointed out that the influence of women is more strongly felt at the federal, state and local level and that, in fact, women constitute the backbone of the soap and detergent markets. She believes that women are at the

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forefront of a movement to slow increasing legislation on soaps and detergents. Self-regulation is the best defense against mandatory regulation, Smeltzer said, and she listed a few of the many investigations that have been the result of prompt action by The Soap and Detergent Association, including questions of accidental ingestion by children, surfactants as toxic substances, the safety of optical brighteners and the safety of fragrances.

Scientist and educator, Dr. V. William Greene, gave a closed-circuit television presentation entitled "Cleanliness and the Health Revolution." His thesis declared that "things were lousy in the good old days" and that the abolition of the soap tax in England in 1852 began a revolution in general health that owes more to soaps and detergents than any other single factor.



Speakers at the Southwest Section's third annual product development seminar included (from left) Peter Schaeufele, Lonza; Chuck Jones, FMC; Walter Hackett, Purex; Jerry Moffett, Shell; and Tom Crist, Monsanto. The sixth speaker was Fred Thatcher of Purex.

100 attend seminar

More than 100 persons attended the AOCS Southwest Section's 1984 all-day symposium, "Product Development III," to hear six speakers on the development of laundry and household care products and their ingredients. The symposium was the largest of the three annual programs conducted by the section, all of which have been held in Buena Park, California.

Jerry Moffett of Shell Chemical led off the program with a description of alcohol surfactant product development and Shell's narrow-range ethoxylates. These ethoxylates, containing less unreacted alcohol and light ethoxylates, were developed to reduce air pollution by spray tower pluming, Moffett said.

Peter Schaeufele of Lonza spoke of recent developments in quaternary ammonium biocides. He presented evidence showing the synergistic effect of combinations of alkyl dimethyl benzene ammonium chlorides and dialkyl dimethyl ammonia chlorides.

Monsanto's Tom Crist spoke on detergent builders, outlining the economics and efficacy of the most commonly used materials.

Chuck Jones of FMC presented data on heavy-duty liquid detergents showing that the sodium/potassium ratio

in phosphate-built formulations is critical to optimum solubility and stability.

Walter Hackett of Purex Corporation spoke on the complexities of floor polish formulations. He discussed the components needed for a good floor polish and gave a historical view of the changes in floor polishes to accompany changes in floor polishing machinery.

The program was concluded with a talk by Fred Thatcher of Purex Corporation. His talk dealt with the marketing of private label products, and how the private label manufacturer can find a niche between the national brands and generic products.

Seminar committee members include: Larry G. Copeland, Pilot Chemical Corp., general chairman; Marjorie L. Besemer, Purex Corp., program chairman; Anne Cowherd, FMC Corp., registrar; Rick Shook, Pilot Chemical Corp., publicity chairman.

Cosmetic program set

"High Technology for Hopes and Dreams: Computers in Cosmetic Science" will be the topic for the Society of Cosmetic Chemists Midwest Chapter's annual seminar to be held Tuesday, Sept. 18, at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare in Rosemont, Illinois.

The program will be divided into four sessions—getting started, support applications, development applications and future developments. Seven speakers from across the nation will participate.

Registration fee, which includes a luncheon, will be \$40 in advance; \$45 at the door. Registration checks payable to SCC Midwest Chapter should be sent to Nancy Allured, SCC Midwest Seminar, PO Box 318, Wheaton, IL 60189.

Armak buys facility

Armak Chemicals Ltd. will purchase equipment installed at the Sarnia plant of Monsanto Canada, which had operated the plant as an ABS resin facility but closed it down early in 1983. Armak will use the facility for the production of a wide variety of quaternary ammonium compounds and fatty amine derivative surfactants. The initial plant capacity will be well in excess of Canadian market requirements, according to Armak.

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