

2005 IFA Award Recognizes Contribution to Human Well-being

The Turkish Ministry of Agriculture and the Ankara Office of the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) estimate that the economic benefits of zinc fertilization in Turkey amount to some US\$ 100 million per year. This figure does not take into account the significant positive influence that increased zinc consumption has had on the health of the Turkish population.

In recognition of his distinguished career and the importance of zinc fertilization, the 2005 IFA International Crop Nutrition Award will be bestowed upon Dr Ismail Çakmak, Professor at Sabanci University in Istanbul.

In the early 1990s, when Dr Çakmak undertook research on the underlying causes of poor growth and leaf symptoms of wheat in Turkey's Central Anatolia region, there was little understanding of the importance of zinc for healthy wheat crops. Dr Çakmak led a long-term, multi-institutional project to investigate these problems. The project quickly obtained funding under the NATO Science for Stability Program. In addition, Dr Çakmak's research was supported by Cukurova University, the Transitional Zone Agricultural Research Institute, the Bahri Dagdas International Agricultural Research Center and CIMMYT-Ankara.

Dr Çakmak has also demonstrated a resultant widespread zinc deficiency among Turkish children in this region. The Anatolia initiative is one of the world's first examples of the use of agricultural practices to address public health problems as well as to improve crop production. Its success provides a model for other countries. More soils throughout the world lack zinc than any other micronutrient. About 50 per cent of the world population suffers from iron and zinc deficiencies, which can be addressed using the cost-effective zinc fertilization method.



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IFA Supports UN Photo Contest and Fight against Desertification

According to United Nations (UN) statistics, one-third of the Earth's surface is threatened by desertification, the most severe form of soil degradation. Consequently, more than a billion people, most of them living in the poorest corners of the world, may suffer negative impacts on their environment, food production and livelihoods.

Climate variability and poor land management combined may trigger the loss of biological or economic diversity that characterizes desertification. North Americans, in particular, are familiar with the dramatic images of the 1930s Dust Bowl, a reminder that extreme land degradation can occur wherever unsustainable practices exist.

Appropriate use of manufactured fertilizers, within the context of integrated soil fertility management, is a critical part of a long-term strategy to reverse the cycle of desertification. Not only does increasing soil fertility protect against the environmental effects of soil degradation, but it also has numerous positive social and economic benefits.

To underscore the contribution that fertilizers can make when used appropriately within the context of integrated soil fertility management, IFA is supporting the photo contest organized by the UN Convention to Combat Desertification in the run-up to the International Year of Deserts and



Desertification in 2006.

Other contest partners include Entico Corporation Ltd, Hewlett-Packard, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Landgraedsla Rikisins in Iceland, TerrAfrica, the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the UN News Centre, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Bank and the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT).

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IFA participates in the International Agri-Food Network (IAFN)

- www.agrifood.net -

which represents all sectors in the food chain



EFMA's Product Stewardship Programme for Fertilizers



The European Fertilizer Manufacturers Association (EFMA) recently launched a new product stewardship programme. In this interview, **Hans van Balken, EFMA's Director for Technology, Environment and Safety**, explains this initiative to readers of *Fertilizers & Agriculture*.

The term "product stewardship" may not be familiar to all our readers. Could you define it in a few simple words?

Put simply, product stewardship (PS) means fertilizer producers' responsibility for their products not only at the production site but throughout the distribution chain all the way to the farmer. This is much broader ranging than just the responsible management of the production unit. It is Responsible Care® applied to the total value chain, i.e. from the moment raw materials are purchased to the application of fertilizers on the farm.

Responsible Care® is the chemical industry's global voluntary initiative under which companies, through their national associations, work together to continuously improve their health, safety and environmental performance, and to communicate with stakeholders about their products and processes.

What are the main elements of EFMA's product stewardship initiative?

The main elements of this initiative of the European Fertilizer Manufacturers Association (EFMA) consist of guidance for the implementation of product stewardship in EFMA member companies. Guidance is provided on how to establish such a programme, based on agreed EFMA standards concerning the production, distribution, storage and use of fertilizers. Reference is made to EU legislation, industry practices and best available techniques. In addition, auditing by an independent third-party auditor is required.

Implementation of the production stewardship initiative and auditing are obliga-

tory for EFMA members and are now a prerequisite for membership.

Why did EFMA feel the need to undertake this initiative at this time ?

Individual members of EFMA continuously strive to improve health, safety and environmental aspects associated with the production, storage, distribution and use of fertilizers. At the association level, we have many joint initiatives to achieve this goal, such as emissions benchmarking, joint research and the development of guidance documents.

However, we discovered that we have been guilty of "navel gazing", meaning that most of our activities are well organized in-house while our involvement outside the fence is far less so. In the recent past, there have been several accidents in the chain, accidents that nobody can afford. We have been extremely good at producing messages,

but having them implemented throughout the entire chain is another story.

What sets this effort apart from a public relations campaign?

The purpose of a public relations campaign is either to promote a product or activity, or to establish better relations with stakeholders in order to improve one's image. In that sense, our activities regarding the product stewardship programme are similar to a public relations campaign. However, together with our stakeholders, we want to achieve a better safety, health and environmental performance and we are very serious about that. This initiative is about actions more than words. Our industry, and agribusiness in general, cannot afford any serious incident concerning fertilizers, which could trigger further regulatory restrictions and higher costs.



Has EFMA established any measurable goals for the programme? Will you be reporting against them to the public or only internally?

The audit manual contains ten elements covering the chain, grouped under four major types of activity: Product Stewardship Management, Sourcing and Manufacturing, Distribution and Product Development, and Marketing and Sales. Company scores, validated by the independent audit, are measured against a defined standard. At the company level, the auditor may make suggestions for improvement. Any implementation on this basis is verified in the following year's audit. The aggregated scores are reviewed by the EFMA Steering Committee. Where weaknesses are identified, prompt corrective action is required. Although adequate time is allowed for improvement, a recalcitrant company could incur penalties, going as far as exclusion from the Association.

Do you think such a product stewardship campaign could be implemented in other regions of the world? Is there something unique about the European context?

Such a product stewardship campaign is not appropriate just for Europe. There are several examples of product stewardship programmes in individual companies outside Europe. Our programme is quite unique since it covers the entire value chain. It has been developed by and for the fertilizer industry. Although creating such a programme is a lot of work, the real challenge is implementing it and keeping it alive.

Tell us about your online platform. What information and tools does it contain?

The online platform contains guidance for those who want to implement a product stewardship programme in their company. In addition, it contains all EU legislation relevant to our industry and all EFMA guidance documents and leaflets. It should be noted, however, that the focus is on the EU. Companies should always check their national requirements.

Why did you decide to put this information in the public domain and not reserve it for your members behind a password?

We have decided to put this information on our web site since we want to show how serious we are about this initiative. Part of the programme's success is the involvement of our stakeholders, such as transporters, distributors and farmers. We cannot do it all by ourselves. We need them. In this way, they have access to our philosophy, our messages and our guidance.

We also hope this will be a good example for others. We are proud that several associations have shown an interest in initiating similar programmes. This can only enhance the standard.

With regular updating, the latest information will always be available.

There's a lot of information in your online interface. Are there any tools to help newcomers implement a product stewardship approach in their companies?

Implementation of a PS programme starts with the commitment of senior management. They are responsible for implementing such a programme in their company. Guidance addressed to them is found in the chapter on managing product stewardship. A simple diagram (pictured at left) takes the user through the main steps.

In addition, each EFMA member company has appointed a company product steward to assist management in the implementation process. EFMA provides training to these product stewards.

For more information, please **contact**

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Related EFMA Publications

Product Stewardship in Fertilizer Companies

A guideline developed by EFMA

Brochure. 6 pp.



Product Stewardship Programme for Fertilizers

The Programme can be accessed on the EFMA web site at

www.efma.org/PRODUCT%20STEWARDSHIP%20PROGRAM/Front_Page.htm

Do's and Dont's: Safe Storage of Fertilizers Containing AN

A-4 poster. Available in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish.

Guidance For Handling Non-Conforming Ammonium Nitrate Based Fertilizers in the Distribution Chain

A-3 poster. Available in English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Dutch.

There are many more publications on the EFMA web site concerning safety, handling, distribution of fertilizer products, best practices, agriculture, food quality, energy recovery, etc.

Most of these can be downloaded at www.efma.org/Publications/index.asp

Paper copies can be ordered by e-mail at main@efma.org

 **from principle to practice**

This article is part of a series that explores how IFA members integrate concepts like sustainable development into their business strategy and daily activities.

Profertil Works with Local Authorities and Communities So Both Sides Gain

By *Arnoldo A. Girotti*

Profertil owns ammonia and granular urea production plants, both of which are located in Bahia Blanca, Buenos Aires Province. It also owns a port terminal in Buenos Aires. Agrium Inc. and Repsol YPF are partners in the Argentinian company.

Profertil's experience as a young producer of ammonia and urea suggests that companies throughout the world need to be able to recognize the preferences, priorities and sensitivities of neighbouring communities. Appropriate and timely decisions then need to be made.

Although companies everywhere must interact with a large number of stakeholders, the growing influence of communities and local authorities on businesses is especially evident. Company managers therefore have to develop new skills to meet the expectations of their production sites' neighbours. For example, these new stakeholders are not satisfied with being told about good environmental performance regarding gaseous emissions, liquid effluent and waste generation – they want to verify it themselves. In their minds, data are only collected to meet regulatory requirements and, possibly, to be provided to the scientific community.

Nor are they satisfied with information that investors and the market consider a good indicator of company performance: reports that operations meet the highest safety standards, certification of compliance with quality, safety and environmental standards or frequent national and international audits.

Communities and local authorities want concrete responses that acknowledge their unique interests and needs.

In the case of Profertil, local stakeholders have verified every environmental impact assessment and risk analysis carried out to date. They have also checked the quality of emissions and discharges and have made sure that the company is in compliance with all relevant national and provincial legislation.

The local stakeholders then asked that the company adopt even more rigorous measures. When operations began at the urea plant, these stakeholders required the design and installation of an odour suppression system to be used during plant start-ups and shut-downs, a special arrangement to enhance noise reduction and many minor interventions. The impact on the ledger of the new-born company was over 12 million US dollars, an amount that Profertil considers to be a good investment in constructive relations with the neighbouring community.

On an annual basis, the company has dedicated at least 10 per cent of total investments to improving safety and environmental protection. This is in addition to meeting basic legal requirements and the most demanding international standards.

The willingness of Profertil to listen and respond to local communities and authorities reflects the company's belief that this is good management. Its programmes and activities are intended to provide continuous evidence of its intention to be a positive addition to the community. Since 2001, for example, more than 32,000 neighbours have visited the ammonia and urea plants to see for themselves how things are run. The community is directly implicated in safety issues: ammonia sensors installed in public areas send a signal to control centres operated by local authorities. There is also a permanent radio communication system linking the site's control room and the local environmental control centre, which is notified about any operational change.



Profertil installed a silencer, a rare innovation, to prevent noise from the site bothering the local community

Managing the company's relationships with the new stakeholders is no longer merely a matter of convictions or of business policies. It is not an issue to be resolved with technical or financial resources alone. Good relationships with neighbours represent a "license to operate", even in a commodity market such as fertilizers.

News, especially bad news, quickly spreads across the globe. Disregarding community relations or managing a situation improperly, can cause delays or insurmountable obstacles to the completion of important projects, with related economic implications. By going beyond basic requirements, Profertil is investing in the local community and the company's global reputation.

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Information resources

FAO Fertilizer Use by Crop series



Fertilizer Use by Crop in Malaysia

FAO, 1st edition, Rome, Italy, 2004. 58 pp.

Fertilizer Use by Crop in Egypt

FAO, 1st edition, Rome, Italy, 2005. 50 pp.

Utilisation des engrais par culture en Algérie

FAO, 1st edition, Rome, Italy, 2005. 43 pp.

Some copies of these three publications are available from IFA (see order form page 12).

Scaling Soil Nutrient Balances

Enabling Mesolevel Applications for African Realities

FAO, Fertilizer and Plant Nutrition Bulletin 15, Rome, Italy, 2004. 132 pp.



Utilisation des phosphates naturels pour une agriculture durable

FAO, Fertilizer and Plant Nutrition Bulletin 13, Rome, Italy, 2004. 151 pp.

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The publications can be downloaded from FAO's AGL online database at www.fao.org/ag/agl/oldocs.jsp

Assuring Food and Nutrition Security in Africa by 2020

Prioritizing Actions, Strengthening Actors and Facilitating Partnerships

Proceedings of an All-African Conference, Kampala, Uganda, 1-3 April 2004. IFPRI, 2020 Vision, 2004. 279 pp.



Development Strategies and Food and Nutrition Security in Africa. An Assessment

F. Heidhues et al. IFPRI, 2020 Discussion Paper 38, December 2004. 50 pp.

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www.ifpri.org/2020africaconference



Oil Palm

Nutrient Disorders and Nutrient Management: Diagnosis, Causes, Prevention, Treatment

T. Fairhurst, J.P. Caliman, R. Härdter and C. Witt, PPI, PPIC, IPI, 2005. 120 pp.

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The UNCTAD/ICC Series of Investment Guides

UN, ICC, 2004-2005. The guides, which familiarize investors with developing countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Uganda...), can be downloaded at www.unctad.org/investmentguides. A paper copy can be ordered free of charge at investment-guides@unctad.org



Items are included on this page as a matter of information.

Inclusion does not constitute an endorsement by IFA.

EU Enlargement Discovering the Agriculture of the New Member States

European Council of Young Farmers, Brussels, Belgium, December 2004. 68 pp.

This publication contains information on the challenges of enlargement, historical background, country information on population, area, main agricultural products, farms, etc.

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UN Millennium Project Reports Investing in Development

UNDP, 2005. 356 pp.

In 2000, world leaders set a series of ambitious targets called the Millennium Development Goals. The United Nations and international development actors have since been striving to realize these objectives and improve the lives of millions of people. *Investing in Development*, the final report of the UN Millennium Project, explains how to cut world poverty by half in coming years. The authors argue that this goal is not only attainable, but affordable.

The Quick Wins outlined in the fifth key recommendation of the overview of *Investing in Development* include "A massive replenishment of soil nutrients for smallholder farmers on lands with nutrient-depleted soils, through free or subsidized distribution of chemical fertilizers and agroforestry, by no later than the end of 2006."

The full report can be downloaded in English, French and Spanish from the web site of the Project at www.unmillenniumproject.org.

A pdf version of the overview is also available in Arabic, Chinese, German, Portuguese and Russian.



Ag Task Forces Consider Areas for Future Work

Task Force on Specialty Fertilizers

At its first meeting in Antalya, Turkey, on 16 March the recently formed IFA Task Force on Specialty Fertilizers reviewed the preferences of IFA members for activities relating to the specialty sub-sector. Using the outcome of a recent survey as the basis for discussion, it identified harmonization of registration procedures and market analyses as potential areas for future work. The group will submit recommendations to the Agriculture Committee at its meeting in Kuala Lumpur.

Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen

The IFA Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen is currently preparing an issue paper, which is expected to be completed by the end of the year. At its first meeting, held in Brussels, Belgium, on 22 March, this group considered the possibility of developing national or regionally adapted guidelines on effective nitrogen management in agriculture. It also expressed interest in organizing an event on good agricultural practices in 2007. ●

IFA's First Event on Enhanced-Efficiency Fertilizers Will Take Place at Industry Birthplace



The IFA International Workshop on Enhanced-Efficiency Fertilizers will be held in Frankfurt, Germany, the birthplace of the fertilizer industry, from 28 to 30 June 2005. This event presents a unique opportunity for participants to become better informed about the latest developments concerning fertilizer products that enhance nutrient uptake. The workshop has been designed by the IFA Agriculture Committee so that representatives of IFA member companies will be able to discuss the unique

characteristics of these products with regulatory authorities and the scientific community. Policymakers from environmental agencies and registration services have been invited. Thus, exchanges of views can take place on these products' beneficial aspects and on current barriers to their wider use.

The workshop will also be an occasion for highlighting the fertilizer industry's proactive contribution to advanced agricultural practices. It complements the industry's activities in the area of good nitrogen management.

Full details about the workshop and online registration are available on the IFA web site at www.fertilizer.org/ifa/memberarea/ag_june05_programme.asp. Members should register before 20 May. ●

Kuala Lumpur Annual Conference Continues IFA's Tradition in Asia

IFA has dedicated particular attention to Asia and the Pacific over the past quarter century, ever since the inception of the regional conference, IFA's second largest event of the year. During that period, Asia's share of global fertilizer production and demand has doubled. IFA's activities in Asia have increased accordingly. Four Annual Conferences have been held in the region during the past decade. Two Technical Conferences, a Production and International Trade Meeting and an Enlarged Council Meeting have all taken place in Asia since the year 2000. In December 2003, IFA launched its China Initiative to increase coverage of the Association's market intelligence regarding the country.

The Fertilizer Demand Meeting during the 73rd IFA Annual Conference in Malaysia will focus on South-east Asia, with presentations concerning the short- and medium-term forecasts for agriculture and fertilizer demand in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam.

On 8 June, Sihai Wu will become the Association's first Chinese president and only the second Asian to hold this position. U.S. Awasthi of India was the IFA's president from 1997 to 1999.

Those looking for signs of an ascendant Asia need look no further. ●

Upcoming IFA Events in Asia

2005 IFA Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific

6-8 December 2005, Bali, Indonesia

2006 IFA Agriculture Conference

Optimizing resource use efficiency for sustainable intensification of agriculture

28 February-1 March 2006, Kunming, China

- Preceded by a one-day workshop on micronutrients on 27 February
- Followed by a field visit on 2 March, with the choice of an agricultural tour or a tour of a phosphate mine and DAP facility.

This event is organized in cooperation with the China National Chemical Construction Corporation (CNCCC), which is presided by IFA's Vice President for China, Lihua Chen.

2006 IFA Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific in conjunction with the annual IFA Production and International Trade Meeting

November 2006, Chiang Mai, Thailand

IFA Returns to the Cradle of Nitrogen Fertilizer Production during BASF Site Visit



Aerial view of Limburgerhof

Early in the 20th century, Fritz Haber, a professor at the Karlsruhe Technical University, developed the process for direct synthesis of ammonia. The era of nitrogen-containing fertilizers began when Carl Bosch of BASF adapted Haber's process to industrial scale. In 1914, Bosch founded the BASF Agricultural Center at Limburgerhof, where the effect of the new nitrogen fertilizers on the yield and quality of agricultural and horticultural crops could be investigated along with their environmental impact. By the 1920s, there was a lysimeter station at Limburgerhof with 232 plots. This station is still in use.

Today, Limburgerhof is the hub of BASF's worldwide agricultural research and development activities. About 1400 people are employed at the site. Most are involved in research, development, registration and marketing related to plant protection products. However, work is also carried out on plant nutrition research and on the development of new fertilizer products.

The scientific work on crop nutrition at Limburgerhof focuses on the development of more efficient fertilizer products. In addition to straight N-fertilizers such as ammonium sulphate nitrate and nitrification inhibitor-stabilized fertilizers, Ludwigshafen BASF produces slow-release fertilizers containing isobutylidene diurea (IBDU) and crotonylidene diurea (CDU).

The presence of scientists from different disciplines is a prerequisite for developing modern, highly efficient and environmentally compatible fertilizers. The newest special fertilizers with enhanced nutrient efficiencies (e.g. ENTEC) would be unimaginable without a team including agronomists, biologists, chemists, physicians and toxicologists. In the case of the new coated fertilizers, specialists in polymer chemistry are involved. Chemists with a highly specialized knowledge of organic chemistry have taken part in the development of new N slow-release compounds.

Following successful initial production in the laboratory, products are tested using specific biological screening systems. When coated fertilizers and N slow-release compounds are tested, such a system consists of pot trials with ryegrass. The grass is cut every two weeks, clippings are analyzed and a nutrient-release curve for the vegetation period is obtained. Other objectives of the pot trials include determining the environmental compatibility and the use efficiency of various nutrients across a range of different fertilizers.

To select the best formulations, field and greenhouse trials are then conducted. In addition to the main agricultural crops, such as cereals, potatoes, sugar beet and oilseed rape, these trials involve vegetables, ornamentals, nursery plants and perennial

IFA will hold its inaugural International Workshop on Enhanced-Efficiency Fertilizers in Frankfurt, Germany from 28 to 30 June. Benefits of using enhanced efficiency fertilizers will be highlighted with a discussion of constraints on their wider use. The workshop will provide opportunities for interaction among regulatory authorities, the scientific community and industry. This workshop is designed by the IFA Agriculture Committee for representatives of IFA member companies with an interest in fertilizer products enhancing nutrient use efficiency. The workshop will be followed by a visit to the BASF Agricultural Center, which will offer a unique opportunity to learn more about the work being carried out by BASF. It will include presentations on the site's history and activities, followed by visits of the research and development activities on enhanced-efficiency fertilizers.

crops, such as apples, grapes and hops. There is a turfgrass research field at Limburgerhof for slow-release fertilizer tests. However, a significant proportion of the trials takes place in farmers' fields. The company's staff, based in Limburgerhof, oversees these trials wherever they are carried out.

Trials under Mediterranean conditions are contracted by BASF to companies and university-based institutes in France, Italy and Spain. Besides winter cereals and fruit trees, the focus of these trials is on growing vegetables using fertigation systems and on warm-season turfgrass for sports facilities and golf courses.

Once the results have been evaluated, production facilities are created. Fertilizer registration under national or European legislation is started, if required. Special fertilizers are marketed by COMPO and agricultural fertilizers by fertiva.

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IFA Launches Online Production and Trade Statistics

For the first time, a selection of statistics on the production and international trade of the main fertilizer products is available on the IFA web site.

Information on exports, imports and production of nitrogen, phosphate, potash and sulphur products can be accessed by the general public. Broken down by region, these statistics cover the calendar years 1999 to 2002.

Access to yearly statistics broken down by country is reserved exclusively for IFA member organizations.

Annual and quarterly reports are available on request

Since the beginning of this year, the Production and International Trade Service has also released a number of traditional products.

These products, which will remain offline, include:

- Quarterly statistics covering January to December 2004, for ammonia, urea, phosphate rock, processed phosphates and sulphur;
- Final 2003 statistics for sulphur and sulphuric acid production and trade;
- Annual 2004 potash statistics both in K₂O and on a product tonne basis.

N Products	Processed Phosphates	Phosphate Rock	Potash	Sulphur
Ammonia	MAP	Phosphate rock	Potash	Sulphur
Urea	DAP			
AN	TSP			
CAN	Phosphoric acid			
AS				

A simple table with clickable hyperlinks allows members to have quick access to statistics by country.

Capacity survey results to be announced at Annual Conference

During the first quarter of 2005, the Production and International Trade Service carried out global surveys of the annual production of the main fertilizer products and the expected future capacity for their manufacture. The results will be announced at the IFA Annual Conference in Kuala Lumpur. ●

Registration for Annual Production and Trade Meeting Opens



The 26th annual IFA Production and International Trade Meeting will be held in Sao Paulo, Brazil, from 11 to 14 September 2005. Members interested in attending may register between now and 9 August.

This event offers an excellent opportunity to interact with senior executives from major international fertilizer producers and trading companies among IFA's members.

Open sessions on 12 and 13 September, designed by the IFA Production and International Trade Committee for all IFA members, will examine global market developments, with a special emphasis on Latin America. Each session will focus on a particular family of products.

The opening session on phosphates will consider the future of the Brazilian market, as well as global DAP trade prospects and the supply of phosphate rock in a number of key world regions.

The sulphur and potash portion of the programme will include such wide-ranging topics as sulphur production in the Canadian oil sands, potash trade in Latin America and potash supply in Brazil.

Natural gas will figure prominently in the nitrogen session. Papers examining the nitrogen market situation in China, India and North America will be presented. Prospects for the global trade of ammonia will also be discussed.

The programme of presentations will be followed by a technical tour of the terminal facilities in Santos and the fertilizer complexes at Cubatao.

Members of the Production and International Trade Committee's four working par-



Photo: USDA-ARS

ties will convene in the run-up to the open programme to advance the Association's statistical reporting and related work.

Full details and updated programme information can be found on the IFA web site at www.fertilizer.org/ifa/confifa.asp. ●

Public Outreach and Analysis and Sampling Standards Climb Technical Agenda

The IFA Technical Committee meeting for member companies and invited speakers was held in Alexandria, Egypt, from 11 to 13 April.

The biennial event included the Committee's strategic planning meeting and a programme featuring eight technical presentations. A visit to the Abu Qir fertilizer complex provided a unique chance to learn more about local technical achievements and industrial practices.

Some 30 representatives from IFA member companies gathered in Alexandria to review the Committee's work and set plans for the coming year. They decided to conduct regular surveys and produce reports on key industry metrics, including energy efficiency, safety and emissions. This work will enable member companies to assess their operations over time, make performance comparisons with similar facilities and determine the need for technology improvements, as well as to identify good industrial and management practices. The Committee opted for the public distribution of "Executive Briefs" of survey results to demonstrate the industry's commitment to responsible production.

In addition, a new task force will review existing international standards for the analysis and sampling of fertilizers.

The Technical Committee will undertake work on product stewardship and draw up a "white paper" delineating product stewardship issues relevant to the fertilizer industry. It will become more involved in activities on regulations pertaining to impurities in fertilizers and to emission permits for fertilizer production. The Committee also decided to provide technical input to upcoming publications of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) by naming expert reviewers for relevant sections of both the 2006 greenhouse gas emissions inventory guidelines that address fertilizer manufacture and use and the Fourth Assessment Report. The Committee will monitor, with an eye towards engagement, the development of the Aleff Group/FIPR project on phosphogypsum. To gauge areas where attention is needed, it will conduct a survey of phosphate producers among IFA's membership.

The 2006 IFA Technical Symposium will take place in Vilnius, Lithuania, from 25 to 28 April. The first call for papers will be

issued shortly. The symposium theme will be defined to draw attention to the role of technical developments in the fertilizer industry with respect to the environment, safety and health and to attract a wider audience.

In conjunction with the Committee's work meeting, a one-day technical programme at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina on 12 April allowed members to benefit from presentations and expert views on the latest developments and driving issues involved in the production of fertilizers. Speakers presented a range of topics focusing on industry safety, water treatment and specialty fertilizer production. IFA members can download the papers in pdf format at www.fertilizer.org/ifa/member-area/tech_april05_programme.asp. ●



IFA Technical Committee Meeting and Plant Visit Alexandria, Egypt, 11-13 April 2005. Cd-rom. Restricted to IFA members (see order form page 12).

China Initiative Update

Improving IFA's understanding of China continues to be a major priority, cutting across all areas of the Association's work. Two more Chinese companies have applied for IFA membership since January. So far, the China Initiative has led to the doubling of membership in that country.

The Executive Secretary of IFA's Production and International Trade Committee spent ten days in China in January, meeting potential members and seeking enhanced levels of information on the Chinese market.

A number of IFA documents have been translated into Chinese during recent months. Major advances have also been made on Chinese versions of web-based tools. ●

New releases in Chinese from the Association for its members

- Global Trends in Processed Phosphate Fertilizers
- December 2004 Report on Global Fertilizer Supply and Trade: 2004-2005
- December 2004 Report on Short-Term Prospects for World Agriculture and Fertilizer Demand: 2003/04-2004/05

Now available from IFA for the general public in Chinese

- December 2004 Summary Report on World Agriculture and Fertilizer Demand, Global Fertilizer Supply and Trade: 2004-2005
- Fertilizers and Their Use. A Pocket Guide for Extension Officers
(Some copies are available from IFA, see order form page 12)

Fertilizers and their Use. IFA/FAO, fourth edition, 2005. 72 pp. The booklet presents guidelines for extension staff on the use of fertilizers. It explains the need for mineral fertilizers for agricultural development in support of food security and the maintenance of soil productivity. It provides general fertilizer recommendations for selected crops and contains information on soil and plant tissue testing.





word: Association

Chasing Phantoms and Opening Markets

What is a trade association for? The concept of an industrial sector association is better known in some countries than in others. However, such an organization generally focuses on pre-competitive issues, namely matters that are in the general interest of the sector and do not give any company a competitive advantage. In the case of IFA, our mission has three parts:



*Luc M. Maene
IFA Director General*

- 1) collecting, analyzing and disseminating information about the industry;
- 2) promoting responsible production and efficient distribution and use of fertilizers; and
- 3) improving the sector's operating environment.

The first two goals are fairly clear to most people. But what does the third – improving the operating environment – mean in concrete terms?

A trade association can facilitate the sale of an industry's products by ensuring that appropriate registration rules are in place. In 2004, for example, when the government of India modified its Fertiliser Control Order to include sulphur, this was a direct result of research and trials in farmer's fields sponsored by the Fertiliser Association of India (FAI), The Sulphur Institute (TSI) and IFA.

Trade facilitation is another task that can be undertaken by such an organization. In the past, IFA worked with the International Organization for Standardization on methods for the sampling and analysis of fertilizers. Following renewed interest by our members, we expect to return to this topic in order to determine whether further harmonization is possible, thus reducing the administrative burden of international trade.

IFA also strives to convince governments and relevant international bodies to construct the enabling frameworks needed to make fertilizers more accessible to farmers in developing countries. In such instances, the Association advocates predictable legislation, the construction of transport infra-

structure, affordable credit facilities, adequate market information and other factors that favour entrepreneurial activities and reduce farmers' risk level.

The Association can also provide credibility to its members. We were recently contacted regarding disruptions to some tender processes following the intervention of phantom traders. These traders had been responding to tenders with offers that largely undercut the competition, but were unable to supply the product when it came to delivery. The entire process therefore had to begin all over again. Because of the time-sensitive nature of the agricultural cycle, such delays can mean the difference between a bumper crop and a failed harvest. How can this be prevented? Sri Lanka has found a creative solution: before a company can respond to a tender for fertilizers in that country, it must prove that it is an IFA

Since IFA only admits bona fide producers, membership is an assurance of credibility

member in good standing. Since we only admit bona fide actors in the sector, our membership certificate serves as reassurance that the delivery will be made.

These are just some of the ways that IFA strives to improve the working environment in which its member companies carry out their daily activities, in both the short and longer terms. The possibilities primarily depend on our members' willingness to engage in the decision-making process and to contribute the resources necessary to address more complex issues effectively. ●

Continued from page 1...

2005 IFA International Crop Nutrition Award

The results of this project were rapidly and effectively communicated to key audiences. The Turkish fertilizer industry quickly responded with adapted products. Farmers have overwhelmingly shown their approval of zinc-fortified fertilizers: in just one decade, demand in Turkey grew from zero to 300,000 tonnes per year. The government made fertilizers containing zinc eligible for state subsidies in 1997.

Zinc fertilization also has a positive impact on the environment, as it increases the overall plant health and the efficiency of both water and nutrient use.

The excellence of Dr Çakmak's work has been recognized by many prestigious bodies, including the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Scientific and Technical Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK).

He was recently elected to the Board of Trustees of CIMMYT. Dr Çakmak is on the editorial board of several scientific publications, including the *European Journal of Agronomy* and the *Journal of Trace Elements in Biology and Medicine*.

The Award will be presented on Tuesday, 7 June, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, during the IFA Annual Conference ●

UN Stresses Importance of Fertilizers

Developed and developing countries should jointly launch, in 2005, a group of Quick Wins, [including]:

- *A massive replenishment of soil nutrients for smallholder farmers on lands with nutrient-depleted soils, through free or subsidized distribution of chemical fertilizers and agroforestry, by no later than the end of 2006.*

Excerpted from Key Recommendation 5 of *Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals*, the final report of the United Nations Millennium Project



Calendar

While every attempt is made to provide accurate information, IFA cannot guarantee the details for non-IFA events. Contact the organizers for confirmation.

IFA - 2005

6 - 8 June 2005

73rd IFA Annual Conference

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia #

Registration deadline: 29 April 2005

13 - 17 June 2005

IFA-IFDC Nitrogen Fertilizer Production Technology Workshop

Maastricht, The Netherlands

Registration deadline: 13 May 2005

To register, contact IFDC*

28 - 30 June 2005

IFA International Workshop on Enhanced-Efficiency Fertilizers

Frankfurt, Germany #

Registration deadline: 20 May 2005

11 - 14 September 2005

2005 Production and International Trade Meeting

Sao Paulo, Brazil #

Registration deadline: 9 August 2005

26 - 30 September 2005

IFA-IFDC Phosphate Fertilizer Production Technology Workshop

Brussels, Belgium

Registration deadline: 26 August 2005

To register, contact IFDC*

15 - 17 November 2005

31st Enlarged Council Meeting

Sevilla, Spain #

Open to IFA ordinary member companies and heads of affiliated associations and research organizations

6 - 8 December 2005

IFA Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific

Bali, Indonesia

Restricted to IFA members

Non-IFA - 2005

13 - 14 June

Biogeochemistry of Potassium in Agricultural Systems

Warsaw, Skierniewice, Poland

Fax: +48 22 8439041 (61,81) ext. 39537 rutkowska@delta.sggw.waw.pl

www.ipipotash.org/pdf/announcements/130605bop1.pdf

3 - 9 July

Training Programme for Senior Maintenance Engineers in the Fertiliser Industry Hyderabad, India

Fax: +91 11 26960052 tech@faidelhi.org

5 - 7 July

AFA - 18th International Annual Technical Conference

Casablanca, Morocco

Fax: +20 2 4173721/4172350 info@afa.com.eg www.afa.com.eg

5 - 16 September

IFDC*- International Training Program on Fertilizer Marketing

Management Bangkok, Thailand

6 - 8 September

IMPHOS - 2nd International Workshop on Phosphorus and Phosphate Compounds (2005-IMPHOS-IWPPC) Kasugai, Japan

Fax: +212 22 48 41 21 imphos@casanet.net.ma www.imphos.org

12 - 16 September

IUT - International Conference on Human Impacts on Soil Quality

Attributes Isfahan, Iran

Fax: +98 311 391 3471 cesoil@cc.iut.ir www.iut.ac.ir/cesoil

14 - 19 September

15th International Plant Nutrition Colloquium (IPNC)

Beijing, China

Fax: +86 10 62891016 ipnc2005@cau.edu.cn www.ipnc15.com

20 - 24 September

IPI-NATESC - International Symposium on Fertigation, Optimizing the utilization of water and nutrients Beijing, China

Fax: +972 8 6465447 2005fs@agri.gov.cn www.ipipotash.org

27 - 29 September

Irrigation and Horticultural Fertilizer Expo Beijing, China

Fax: +44 208 744 1705 newag@newaginternational.com

www.newaginternational.com

5 - 7 October

FMB - 19th European Fertilizer Conference & Exhibition

Cannes, France

fmb@fmb-group.co.uk www.fmb-group.co.uk/

22 - 26 October

3rd "Silicon in Agriculture" Conference Uberlândia, Brazil

Fax: +55 34 32182225 ghk@triang.com.br

www.siliconinagriculture.iciag.ufu.br

23 - 26 October

BSC - Sulphur 2005 Moscow, Russia

Fax: +44 20 7903 2432 conferences@crugroup.com

www.britishtsulphurconferences.com

14 - 18 November

IFDC*- International Training Program on Competitive Agricultural Systems and Enterprises (in French)

Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

*IFDC—An International Center for Soil Fertility and Agricultural Development
Fax: +1 256 381 7408 hrd@ifdc.org www.ifdc.org

To view a more exhaustive list of conferences click on "Conferences and Events" on IFA's web site.

Continued from page 1... IFA Supports UN Photo Contest

How to enter the UNCCD photo contest

Three prizes will be awarded for outstanding photos that depict the problem of desertification conceptually and artistically. The top two prizes are worth US\$ 3000 and 2000, respectively. All three prize winners will travel to Nairobi, Kenya, to attend the award ceremony at the seventh United Nations Conference on Desertification in October 2005.

Each entrant may send up to three original photos by e-mail. These entries should be sent only to the secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat

Desertification at photo@unccd.int. The contest ends on 30 August 2005.

For full details on the UNCCD photo contest:

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCCD Press Office

PO Box 260129

Haus Carstanjen

D-53153 Bonn, Germany

photo@unccd.int

www.unccd.int/publicinfo/photo/menu.php

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IFA comprises around 450 member companies in more than 80 countries and includes manufacturers of fertilizers, raw material suppliers, regional and national associations, research institutes, traders and engineering companies.

IFA collects, compiles and disseminates information on the production and consumption of fertilizers and acts as a forum for its members and others to meet and address technical, agronomic, supply and environmental issues.

IFA also sponsors research related to the efficient use of plant nutrients in agriculture, and liaises closely with relevant international organizations, such as the World Bank, FAO, UNEP and other UN agencies.

IFA President

John Van Brunt, President
Agrium Inc., Canada

IFA Director General

L.M. Maene

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Mailing list

Subscription to F&A is free of charge. Send full address details to be added to the mailing list. Additional copies may be supplied to organizations to circulate on behalf of IFA.

Letters

We invite your contributions of letters, documents, articles, photographs, etc.

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-Design: Dora Maltz

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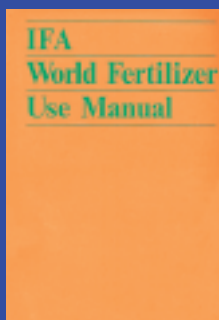
Reference to individuals, publications, research, products, companies or organizations does not indicate endorsement by IFA.

Now free of charge!

IFA World Fertilizer Use Manual

W. Wichmann, IFA, 1992.
632 pp.

The manual contains detailed information on current fertilizer use recommendations and practices, for a wide range of world crops.



Following an introduction on fertilizers and their efficient use, there are chapters on individual crops or groups of crops, each written by an author who is a recognized expert in the matter. There is information on more than 100 crops grown for food and renewable raw materials.

Each chapter contains: information on the biology of the crop, plant and soil analysis data, nutrient uptake and removal figures, recommendations for fertilizer use, current fertilizer practice in different countries and further reading.

For more information please consult our web site at www.fertilizer.org/ifa/form/pub_det.asp?id=909

To order copies, see order form below.

IFA Request Form agriculture May 2005

Please tick the box below and return to IFA by fax: +33 1 53 93 05 45 / 47

or send an e-mail to publications@fertilizer.org

Note: most IFA materials are available via the web site at www.fertilizer.org

- Fertilizer Use by Crop in Malaysia
- Fertilizer Use by Crop in Egypt
- Utilisation des engrais par culture en Algérie
- IFA Technical Committee Meeting, Alexandria, Egypt. Cd-rom *restricted to IFA members*
- Fertilizers and their Use. *Chinese version*
- IFA World Fertilizer Use Manual

Name

Company/Organization

Address

E-mail Web