

Chemical Markets

Lanolin Price Range Shows Consolidation

Fine Chemicals

A degree of "sanity" has returned to the lanolin market as prices have started to show some signs of stabilization sources said, and they are consolidating into a narrower range than has been seen in the recent past.

But, the producers emphasize that lanolin supplies are tight and wool grease, the primary raw material, is still priced at very high levels and is in short supply.

Overall prices are falling into a range of the mid \$1.30s to the low \$1.40s for cosmetic grade, although at least one producer is quoting prices ranging from \$1.55 up to \$1.64 for 10 quantities. During the closing weeks of 1974 prices were scattered all around, ranging from \$1.08 to \$1.64 per pound. Pharmaceutical grade was quoted Wednesday from \$1.31 to \$1.35.

"I think that those who sell the grease realize that it is not worth \$1.10 per pound, and if the prices keep going up for wool grease and lanolin, the markets will be lost," said one producer.

Another source said, "this is the general theory."

Sources also noted that they have heard of spot sales for wool grease as high as \$1.30 or \$1.50 per pound.

Industry people have expressed fears that if the price of lanolin goes too high then users would look to substitutes. At one time some said \$1 per pound would be the cut-off point.

But now, with many industries reporting slow sales, it is difficult to tell who is cutting their use of lanolin because of the price and who is reducing its consumption because of reduced sales. Several sources said the demand for their product was still relatively high.

However, an executive with one producing company said that users might be reluctant to change existing formulations and product identity, but lanolin's growth could be stunted if new products are formulated without it.

Wool auctions are currently

West Coast Director Named by Cyanamid

Journal of Commerce Special
LOS ANGELES — Richard G. Keppler has been appointed to the newly-created post of regional director of chemicals on the West Coast for American Cyanamid Co., it was announced here by George W. Russell, senior vice president.

Mr. Keppler's offices will be at 2300 South Eastern Avenue here. Mr. Russell said creation of the new position is in line with Cyanamid's projected long-term growth potential in chemicals on the West Coast.

being conducted in Australia, and the Australian Daily News, published by the Consulate General's office, said that the Japanese and Eastern European bloc are the principal purchasers.

A lanolin producer asserted that the Australian Government has bought more than 40 per cent of the auction's offerings in order to support the price level.

"When what they have stockpiled hits the market, we'll have grease coming out of our ears. The question is when."

Industrial Chemicals

Current prices for alcohols posted by the Union Carbide Corp. are as follows:

Ethanol 190 proof, undenatured specialty grade, \$1 per gallon; ethanol 200 proof, undenatured specialty, \$1.10 per gallon; "Synasol" solvent, 190 proof GF-3, \$1.04 per gallon.

n-Propanol, 23 cents per pound; isopropanol anhydrous, 70 cents per gallon; n-butanol and isobutanol both 22 cents per pound; n-pentanol, 2-methyl butanol and primary amyl alcohol are listed at 30 cents per pound.

Methyl amyl alcohol is 27.5 cents per pound, 2-ethylhexanol is 28 cents per pound, and diisobutyl carbinol is 58 cents per pound, freight collect.

All prices are for Carbide's freight zone A.

Phthalic anhydride production declined by 103.57 million pounds in December compared to Nov.'s figures.

The U. S. International Trade Commission reported that December's production totaled 308.47 million pounds while November's stands at 414.04 million pounds. The cumulative total for 1974 is 5.998 billion pounds.

Paint Materials

Scattered small resales of casein at 73 to 74 cents for industrial and 88 cents for edible have been reported by the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Exporters are reported increasing their inquiries about U. S. inventories because it's been almost a year since the last large volume purchases were made. However, industry sources have said that inventories are stretching out because of the overall slow pace of business.

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Plastics Corner

By WILLIAM H. LANDER
Journal of Commerce Staff

The vinyl industry has decided to continue its court fight against the OSHA regulations for the vinyl chloride industry promulgated by the secretary of labor on Oct. 4, 1974.

After two days of consultations involving executives of The Society of the Plastics Industry, senior executives of manufacturing firms, and a battery of lawyers, in Washington, the question was what to do about the 3 to 0 adverse decision handed down by the U. S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in New York on Jan. 31, 1975. It is understood that a variety of opinions were expressed, but at the end it was decided not to accept the Circuit Court's decision.

An appeal to the highest court in the land — the U. S. Supreme Court in Washington — however, does not automatically mean that the court will hear the case. In normal practice, when an appeal reaches the court, it is submitted to the justices, and unless at least four want to hear the case, it is not put on the calendar.

It is not easy to get four votes out of nine, as many appellants have found out in the past. And as things now stand, the vinyl manufacturers will need four votes out of seven, as Justice William O. Douglas and Justice Thurgood Marshall are absent, being at Bethesda Naval Hospital.

The decision of the SPI and the manufacturers to go to the Supreme Court means that it was felt that it was not good strategy to go back to the Second Circuit and ask the full bench to hear an appeal against what its three-man panel had decided by unanimous vote. It will be recalled that Justice Tom Clark, a former member of the Supreme Court, said that the court found that the contentions of the appellants were "meritless." In the final paragraph of the long opinion, he said:

"It is our conclusion that the challenged aspects of the secretary's vinyl chloride standard are supported by substantial evidence in the record and that the petitions for re-

view must be denied. Taking into account the delay occasioned by these petitions, we think that a reasonable 'lead time' is appropriate and therefore order that the secretary's regulations, rather than being effective Jan. 1, 1975, shall become effective 60 days after the date of this order and that the time requirement as to respiratory protection... is rescheduled accordingly."

As a starter the Society of the Plastics Industry filed a motion with the court of appeals in New York, asking for a stay of its ruling of Jan. 31, pending application to the Supreme Court for a writ of certiorari. The SPI also asked for a continuance of the temporary standard of 50 parts per million pending final disposition of the case.

It was announced that the petition for a writ will be filed within 20 days, and that every effort will be made to get the proceedings before the Supreme Court on the ground that the court of appeals erred in its interpretation of the "substantial evidence" rule when it on Jan. 31 upheld the OSHA one part per million standard.

The SPI further argued that, contrary to the enabling legislation which created OSHA, the one ppm standard subjects the industry to a technologically and economically infeasible regulatory code.

The SPI further contends that even OSHA has conceded the infeasibility of the standard based on one ppm; the SPI also said that OSHA made a "policy judgment" in the case rather than basing it on factual data.

Ralph L. Harding, president of the SPI, said that the VCM-PVC industry is making every effort to reduce worker exposure levels, and added that this work will continue regardless of the fact that it has petitioned the Supreme Court for a review. He said that the decision to ask for a writ of certiorari was based on the fact that the appellate court ruling would have required the VCM-PVC industry to develop infeasible engineering controls and work practices in an attempt to achieve unknowable exposure levels. The petitioners believe that the Supreme

Vinyl Industry Decides To Make Another Attempt Against OSHA Regulation

Court is the one that should resolve the final status of the standard, he said.

Carbide Promises Full Disclosure

F. Perry Wilson, chairman of the board of Union Carbide Corp., has promised full disclosure of the cause of the accident at the Antwerp low-density polyethylene plant as soon as it has been determined.

"It is our intention to share everything we learn with the rest of the industry so that future tragedies of this type can be avoided," Mr. Wilson said. He expressed regret for the tragic loss of life and the injuries resulting from the Feb. 10 explosion. It took six lives.

A team of technical experts is continuing the investigation. As previously reported, it caused substantial damage to the facility and operations will be out indefinitely. Customers have been assured that their needs will be supplied from other Union Carbide affiliated companies in Europe and from producing locations in other parts of the world until production is resumed at Antwerp. Union Carbide and its affiliates produce low-density polyethylene in Sweden, Scotland, Japan, Australia, India, Brazil, and Canada, in addition to the United States.

The plant, situated on the right bank of the Scheldt River in Antwerp, is operated by Union Carbide Belgium, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Union Carbide Corp. It had a capacity of 300 million pounds a year.

National Patent

National Patent Corp. reported net income for the fourth quarter of 1974 was \$195.113 on sales and other revenue of \$6,934,877, compared to a net loss of \$2,144,785 on sales of \$5,691,325, a year earlier. Net income for 1974 was \$1,732,821 on sales and other revenue of \$27,769,184 compared to net loss of \$5,531,483 on revenues of \$18,094,521.

Meitinger Named

Sylvester Meitinger has been appointed marketing manager—automotive rubber for the SWS Silicones Corp., Adrian, Mich.

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