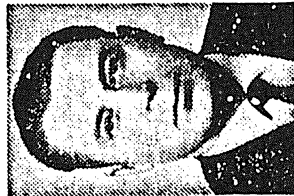


MINERAL FERTILIZERS BRING BUMPER HARVESTS

The 8th International Fertilizer Congress opens in Moscow on June 22, and more than 1,700 specialists are expected from 40 countries. This interest in chemicals for agriculture is not surprising, for mineral fertilizers are steadily being made greater use of for raising yields.

Mineral fertilizers have been known to double and even treble the harvest. For example, there are grain yields of 3 to 10 tons per hectare, where without fertilizers there would be only 1-1.2 tons per hectare.

Our correspondent spoke to Anatoly GOLTSOV, Chairman of the Congress Organizing Committee, Deputy Minister of Agriculture of the USSR, and asked him about chemicals for agriculture.



Q: HOW is the production and use of mineral fertilizers developed in the USSR?

A: The mineral fertilizer industry is one of the biggest industries right now, sixth after oil, gas, coal, cast iron and steel for bulk.

Today one ton in five of mineral fertilizers in the world is produced in the Soviet Union.

From 1971 to 1975 our agriculture received 307,000,000 tons of mineral fertilizers, and the resolutions of the 25th CPSU Congress provide for still further growth—collective and state farms will receive 467,000,000 tons in the next five years, and concentrated highly nutritious fertilizers will have preference.

Increasing the nutritious value of fertilizers is a great saving in transport and storage. An estimated 290,000,000

and at Soviet stations where the experiments have been in progress for more than 60 years now.

Of course, if too much fertilizer is used by mistake, or the wrong kind for the particular soil, it does not help. But a cut in mineral fertilizers would inevitably lead to a drop in food production.

Q: In this context, what is the role of science and research institutions in working out recommendations for fertilizers?

A: In the Soviet Union, the State Agrochemical Service and many research institutions are concerned with many aspects of the rational use of mineral fertilizers.

All agricultural land is regularly checked. Agrochemical maps are compiled, and recommendations made on the fertilizers to use on every farm. All this is paid for by the state; the farmers only have to use the fertilizers according to the Agrochemical Service maps.

At present, the Agrochemical Service has 205 zonal laboratories under the Central Institute for Agrochemical Services of Agriculture and its 12 zonal branches. Laboratories service an average of 230 farms, and almost every collective or state farm is covered.

Today virtually every science depends, to a large extent, on the de-

velopments in other sciences, pure and applied. For example, nuclear physics has given quite a lot to agricultural chemistry. Isotopes used for studying mineral nutrition for plants, chemical changes and the shift in chemical elements in the soil and in the biosphere have made it possible to find out more exactly how much and what plants need.

All this has made it possible to get bigger harvests and to use mineral fertilizers rationally.

Q: What do you expect from the 8th International Fertilizer Congress?

A: Many countries have gained a lot of experience in the production and rational use of mineral fertilizers and we believe that there will be many fruitful exchanges at the Moscow Congress. The main papers by prominent scientists and the professional discussions will help to sum up what has been achieved in this field, to point out directions for the future in agricultural chemistry and to promote new methods of using mineral fertilizers. The International Exhibition of Mineral Fertilizers will be on during the Congress.

All who come to the Congress from abroad will be interested, too, in our achievements in the field, to see the collective and state farms, our research institutes, to get to know what the Soviet people have achieved.