

By **Bruce F. Shank**, executive editor

Demand, imports, deregulation create fertilizer price speculation

The price of fertilizer may roller coaster for the next two to three years according to industry analysts. Large fertilizer users, who have enjoyed stable urea prices for nearly ten years, are planning for increases.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture reports demand has increased more than 200% for nitrogen and more than 65% for potash since 1970. Increased demand for fertilizer has been met largely by importing urea from countries where natural gas prices are cheaper and a strong dollar favors U.S. buyers.

Natural gas is a major component in urea manufacturing. To balance trade the U.S. has now deregulated natural gas. In a story in *Fertilizer Progress*, The Andersons Sid Muse said imports will continue to put downward pressure on U.S. fertilizer prices. He added deregulation will cause an initial price increase in fertilizer, then overproduction will lower prices within two to three years.

No one has put a figure on the initial increase to be caused by deregulation, but a ChemLawn spokesman used the term "drastic." Higher fertilizer prices will force lawn care companies, sod producers, and nurserymen to raise prices. They will also encourage development of nitrification inhibitors.

Fungigation of greens promising

Where there are greens there is disease. Dr. Phil Larsen, turf pathologist at Ohio State University, thinks he has a better idea to prevent disease damage of golf greens. He has coined the term fungigation for his system under testing at OSU and on an Ohio state park golf course.

The process entails injecting fungicides into the irrigation system at each green. "It's impractical to inject fungicides at the pump letting water push them all over the course," said Larsen as he wrapped up his last field day before moving to the University of Minnesota in 1985. "This way you use only the fungicides you need where you need them. When perfected, the superintendent will be able to quickly attach a container of fungicide to an injector at the side of the green and let the program run as normal."

Pumping iron gets results

More and more lawn care companies are including iron in their program to boost the color impact of their service to customers. Soil tests might show adequate iron but soil pH and other elements can make it unavailable. Adding the iron to the program gives a dramatic dark green color to the turf and nets positive results from customers.

STAFF

Executive Editor
Bruce F. Shank, Cleveland
Managing Editor
Maureen Hrehocik, Cleveland
Assistant Editor
Ron Hall, Cleveland
Publisher
Dick Gore, Atlanta
Senior Vice President
Tom Greney, Chicago
Group Publisher
Robert Earley, Cleveland
Production Manager
Anne MacLean, Duluth
Production Supervisor
Marilyn MacDonald, Duluth
Graphic Design
Beth Travis-Betts, Duluth
Circulation Manager
Laurie Miller, Duluth
Directory Coordinator
Sheryl Albertson, Duluth
Reader Service Manager
Gail Kessler, Duluth
Promotion Director
Linda Winick, Cleveland

OFFICES

ATLANTA
3091 Maple Drive
Maple Center One Building
Atlanta, GA 30305
(404) 233-1817

CLEVELAND
7500 Old Oak Boulevard
Cleveland, OH 44130
Editorial: (216) 243-8100

CHICAGO
111 East Wacker Drive
Chicago, IL 60601
(312) 938-2344

SEATTLE
1333 N.W. Norcross
Seattle, WA 98177
(206) 363-2864

DULUTH
120 West Second Street
Duluth, MN 55802
(218) 723-9200

MARKETING REPRESENTATIVES

Dick Gore
Atlanta (404) 233-1817
Ron Kempner
Atlanta (404) 233-1817
Joe Kosempa
Cleveland (216) 243-8100
Robert Mierow
Seattle: (206) 363-2864