

AN AWAKENING TO THE VALUE OF FERTILIZERS IN FOOD PRODUCTION



Greetings and welcome to the second issue of **BETTER CROPS-INDIA**. We were very happy with the response we received to the first issue of this publication in 2007 and look forward to future issues.

The year 2008 has brought profound changes to the fertilizer industry around the world. The sudden increase in fertilizer demand from all regions has resulted in a short supply and rising fertilizer prices. Indian farmers have been protected from these changes to some degree. However, government agencies supporting fertilizer subsidies have felt the pressure of not only rising fertilizer costs, but also increasing cost of food grain commodities.

During this past year we have read many headlines about not only the cost, but the value of fertilizers to food supplies. While all of us in this industry are well aware of the need for nutrient replacement in most agricultural soils, the recent

renewed interest in the fact that 40 to 50% of all food comes from the use of fertilizer nutrients has been high on the agenda of public policy makers and the general public. Fertilizers are critical to staving off hunger in many parts of the world, and the fact that we can continue to improve the yield and quality of food products with balanced fertilizer use, is an important role for the agricultural community in our society. And profits...well fertilizers also play a major role in enhancing farmer profits and supporting rural economies.

On a global scale, food grain stocks continue to decline...a serious problem for all countries to contend with. Our research activities in IPNI have clearly provided us with the knowledge that in most countries we can make significant improvements in food grain production with the advancement of existing technologies. Improved crop varieties, cultural practices and fertilizer nutrients all have a role to play in meeting the growing demand for food. We in IPNI are very proud of the past efforts of our employees in India, helping to demonstrate the positive role that plant nutrients play in building on the agricultural production in the country.

We prepare to begin 2009 with a renewed optimism in agriculture, a number of new staff in IPNI, and an ongoing commitment to maintain our focus on the positive role that fertilizers can play in food security for India.

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BETTER CROPS-INDIA

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