

Are plants missing CMA message?

Only 55% have heard of new enhancements to Responsible Care® campaign

Nearly half of *CP* readers say they aren't aware of the new, more stringent aspects of the Chemical Manufacturers Association (CMA) Responsible Care® campaign, but the chemical industry's top leaders are listening carefully these days to pundits who decry environmental woes.

The Problem

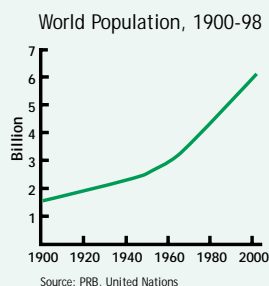


fig. 1

He noted that it took all of human history for world population to reach 1.6 billion in 1900. Now, a scant hundred years later, world population is topping 6 billion (see fig. 1).

Clif Curtis, director of the Global Toxic Initiative for the World Wildlife Fund, also addressed the group of senior chemical industry executives and warned that, "The production and release of vast quantities of novel synthetic chemicals over the past 75 years has proved to be a global experiment—one that involves all life. Ironically, some chemicals that were developed to control disease, increase food production, and improve our standard of living are, in fact, a threat to biodiversity and human health. Because the risk from these originally well-intentioned chemicals outweighs their benefits, their continued use is not warranted."

The Commitment

Industry Commitment to Sustainable Development

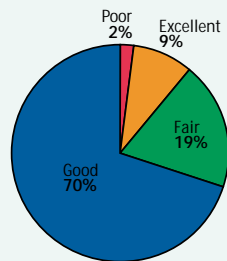


fig. 2

(see June *CP*, pg 19), which embraces the three pillars of sustainable development—society, the economy and the environment. The exchange among Brown, Curtis and the industry's senior executives is part of the commitment underlying the new program.

But is the chemical industry committed to the principles of sustainable development? Are people ready to balance

economic, environmental and social needs? Will they reduce waste products to an absolute minimum?

So it would seem, according to a December '99 survey of 1,000 *CP* readers. Nearly 80% gave affirmative ratings (see fig. 2).

How effective will the enhanced Responsible Care® program be? It's hard to say. The top leadership in the chemical industry appear to be working hard to make it effective.

But the same survey of *CP* readers that gives high ratings to the industry's commitment to sustainable development



The Challenge

Perceived Effectiveness of Enhanced Responsible Care®

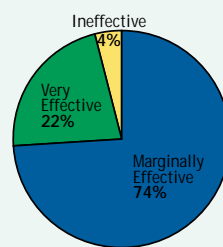


fig. 3

gives relatively low ratings to the perceived effectiveness of the new Responsible Care® program. Only 55% of our readers were aware of the new enhancements and, of those who were, almost three-quarters felt the program will only be marginally effective (see fig. 3).

So what should be done? Build real trust among employees and employers.

CP's June editorial, "Stronger Responsible Care®," raised the issue of trust, asking:

- Is a piece missing from enhanced Responsible Care®?
- In seeking to gain the public trust, doesn't the industry also need to build stronger employee–employer trust?

The chemical industry's license to operate in the new millennium will depend on gaining the public trust. In an atmosphere of downsizing and restructuring, the accompanying loss of loyalty needs more attention.

After all, committed employees will be the cornerstone for gaining the public trust!

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