

INTRODUCTION

Conscious of the essential role which fertilizers play in the production of plant food, and the responsibility to take care on its economic use in an ecologically-controlled way, CIEC, as the oldest international society in this field of Agricultural Sciences is proud of its 65-year old history.

CIEC believes that a view into the past, where many problems about plant nutrition have already been discussed at a scientific level, will offer a good chance to continue its work for further improvements and progress in plant nutrition and fertilization.

Therefore, CIEC has decided to publish a special issue of a review in which the programs of all its congresses and symposia, having taken place after World War II, will be compiled. CIEC regrets, not being able to start this work from the beginning, due to the lack of data and documents.

The foundation was the result of two conferences of an international group of fertilizer experts from 29 countries. The first preparatory conference took place in 1932 in Rome and the second in November 1933 in Amsterdam, where the new association was established as "CENTRE INTERNATIONAL DES ENGRAIS CHIMIQUES".

The first World Congress was organized in 1938 in Rome and dealt mainly with fertilizer production techniques, analytical methods of soil testing for the nutrient demand of crops and fertilizer application measures.

Interrupted by World War II, the second CIEC World Congress could not be organized earlier than in October 1951 in Rome.

From this date a comprehensive and complete documentation of all CIEC activities of CIEC could be collected. The author regrets not having been successful in finding archives or other bibliographic sources to obtain more information on the programs of CIEC conferences before the war. However, he is of full hope that the start of documentation from the year 1951 will allow the reader a certain view back into the co-operative spirit of the pre-war conferences of the "Centre International des Engrais Chimiques" - known as "International Scientific Centre of Fertilizers" and abbreviated C.I.E.C..

The review offers an historical spectrum in concern of the eminent role of fertilizers in the improvement of plant food production within the last half century - full of important research results and answers on nutritional problems, which arose due to the intensification of cropping and soil cultivation in relation to a sustainable management of land-use systems for the nourishment of mankind.

Furthermore, this review can impart a comprehensive impression on the number of countries and on the national and international scientific institutions and research stations, which have co-operated with CIEC as an independent, non-governmental scientific association. The reader will very seldom find such compiled data on fertilizers in their efficiency for cropping as in this review