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Predictions for record fertilizer sales

ST. LOUIS, Mo. - A fertilizer industry spokesman said that members of his industry have "grossly underestimated' the ability of America's farmers to operate in adversity during the past and he predicted that next season would be a record-high year for fertilizer sales.

President of The Fertilizer Institute, Edwin M. Wheeler, in remarks before the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) Fertilizer Conference and TFI Trade Fair, said producers and dealers

farmers have made substantial investments in land and machinery and they "are going to get that crop in,' regardless of weather or a shortened planting season.

"This means, then," Wheeler said, "that the fertılizer dealers must do a better job in planning for inventories that can handle a short season.

"We in the industry, and particularly in the retail level, are simply not expanding our local storage capacity commensurate

should recognize that with the steady, certain growth of the market," he said.

> Wheeler told the national gathering of fertilizer and equipment dealers that the fertilizer outlook for 1980 is, "somewhere between good and tremendous" forecasting the best tonnageyear in the industry's history

 53 million tons. The reasons for his optimism, he said, were that ter net income than they have in several years and that they are showing confidence by buying more

equipment and contacting dealers at an early date. Beyond this, Wheeler said that abandonment of a government set-aside program will bring poorer, less fertile land back into production, requiring comparatively large amounts of fertilizer for best crop fields.

He cautioned dealers to remember that farm operating costs have risen dramatically and retailers should fully discuss their credit policies with farmers. With farmers looking for possible ways to cut costs, dealers should work closely with them to assure that fertilizer application is not reduced, thus reducing yield potential, he warned.

The Fertilizer Institute is the industry's Washingtonbased association, representing fertilizer producers, manufacturers, equipment manufacturers and retailers in all areas of industry concerned.







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