

Production of Niacin in China

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Abstracts

Niacin (also known as vitamin B3) includes nicotinic acid and nicotinamide, both of which play the same physiological role. In China, the content of nicotinamide in vitamin B3 accounts for 90%. Producers mainly produce nicotinamide, which is in great demand in the fast-growing feed industry.

The production of niacin in China started in the 1960s with small output. After the 20th Century, increase in supply of raw materials and breakthrough in technology promoted the capacity of the product. In 2013, its output is estimated at 21,500 tonnes, making it rank in the top five vitamins.

In recent years the capacity of niacin has witnessed stable expansion which is evident in 2012-2013. However, this has led to overcapacity and decline in price. Since 2010, the price of niacin has shown a general downtrend.

Drop in prices of raw material also play a role in this. The raw materials, including 3-picoline and 3-cyanopyridine, both experienced large capacity expansion, pulling down their prices. Most niacin producers in China adopt 3-picoline, whose capacity has risen from 20,000t/a in 2008 to 50,200t/a in 2013.

Contents

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.2-1 Producers of niacin in China, 2011-2013

Table 2.1-1 Producers of 3-picoline in China, 2011-2013

Table 2.2-1 Producers of 3-cyanopyridine in China, 2011-2013

List Of Figures

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1-1 Capacity and output of niacin in China, 2008-2013

Figure 1.3-1 Market price of nicotinic acid in China, 2010-Nov. 2013

Figure 2.1-1 Capacity and output of 3-picoline in China, 2008-2013

Figure 2.1-2 Ex-works price of 3-picoline in China, 2008-2012

Figure 2.2-1 Capacity and output of 3-cyanopyridine in China, 2008-2013

Figure 2.2-2 Ex-works price of 3-cyanopyridine in China, 2009-2012

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