

# GREEN NEWS

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## Sticker Shock for Fertilizer

Turf managers and growers have taken a double hit with the increasing costs of fuel. Not only do you have to pay more each time you fill the tanks of your equipment, but you also pay more for the fertilizer you use on the grounds or crops you manage. Every time there's an increase in the price of a barrel of oil, the aftershocks are felt in the fertilizer market. Making matters worse are the increasing demand and diminishing supply of natural gas - the cost of which represents 70 to 80 percent of the expense of producing ammonia, the building block of all nitrogen fertilizer products.

Some experts are predicting as much as a 20-percent increase in the price of fertilizer this year alone. Factors include depletion of U.S. gas wells, domestic nitrogen fertilizer plant closures, and increasing reliance on imported natural gas.

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) predicts natural gas demand will increase 2.2 percent in 2005 and 3.2 percent in 2006. At the same time, domestic natural gas production will only increase 0.5 percent largely because existing U.S. gas wells are becoming depleted. The result: The country has to import more natural gas and the price keeps climbing. (Short-Term Energy Outlook — March 2005, U.S. Department of Energy, March 8, 2005).

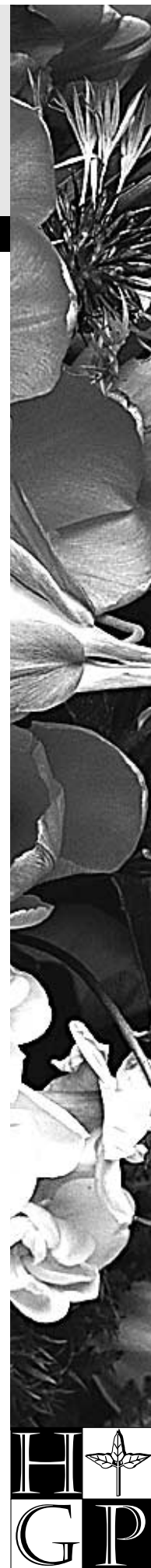
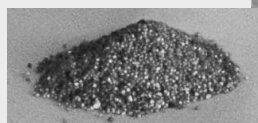
One long-term fix is to build ports where liquefied natural gas shipped from Alaska could be offloaded. But the short-term outlook is dim. According to The Fertilizer Institute's (TFI) testimony to congress in March, the United States has lost 20 nitrogen fertilizer production facilities since 1998. Fifteen of those

have closed for good and five plants are idle. This has resulted in a 35-percent decline in ammonia production in 2003/04 compared to 1998/99. In the same time period, U.S. nitrogen imports have increased from 6.11 million tons on nitrogen to 10.36 million tons. Although the fertilizer industry obviously focuses on the ag sector, the problems they are lobbying about clearly impact the Green Industry too.

What can you do about the rising costs in the short term? HGP is steering its customers towards fertilizers that either last longer or can

### POLYON®

Why spend more time and money on a less efficient product? POLYON® controlled-release fertilizer may be more expensive in cost per ton upfront, but it's the most economical method over the long haul. POLYON® saves you money in both labor and application costs, and because of its consistent release of nutrients, plant growth is more uniform. With POLYON®'s longevity, your fertilizer dollars go farther.



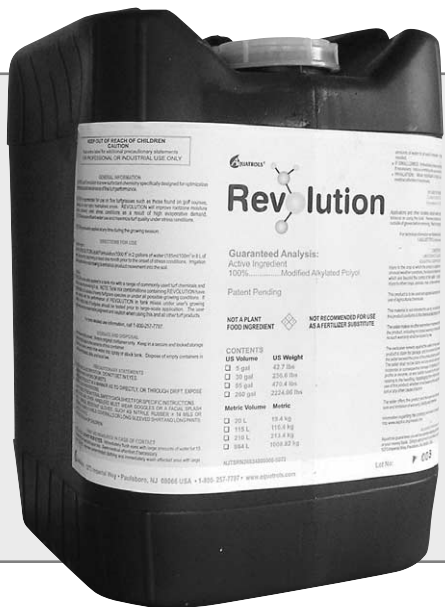
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be put down in smaller amounts. Says owner Ken Findeisen, "Emerald Isle Tru-Foliar products are designed to be used efficiently in smaller quantities, and products such as Best's Polyon have terrific longevity. Depending on the amount you use, Polyon can last anywhere from 10-16 weeks on fairways or lawns."

Steve Franzen of Simplot Professional Products, reinforces this. "For the foreseeable future, fertilizer will be more expensive and more difficult to obtain. Prudent turf and nursery managers should secure their fertilizer needs earlier than they have traditionally. It is also a good time to evaluate products to insure you are getting the best value for your fertilizer dollar. As with anything you purchase, the cheapest price is not always the best value."

## TRUE FOLIAR®

Emerald Isle True Foliar Nutrition products are designed to be primarily absorbed through the leaf. This efficient method significantly lowers nutrient inputs to provide the same nutrition and growth.



## REVOLUTION™

New Revolution™ wetting agent takes the guesswork out of growing great turf from the bottom up. It works in the soil to stabilize moisture levels, balance air-to-water ratios, and provide better access to nutrients in the rootzone. This tremendous improvement in soil conditions lets the plant function at its greatest genetic potential. The result? Stronger healthier turf throughout the season that will perform in all conditions.



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