

Petro Chemicals

Imports of major petrochemicals from Canada showed an overall increase in 1987 over 1986. Products which experienced a rise included ethylene dichloride (14,423 MT to 48,099 MT), methanol (476,313 MT to 532,339 MT), and LDPE (948 MT to 2,117 MT). Imports declined in 1987 from 1986 for styrene monomer (60,516 MT to 51,001 MT) and HDPE (414 MT to 68 MT). Ethylene glycol remained about the same at 63,140 MT in 1988 (64,066 MT in 1987).

Although demand for commodity petrochemicals and resins has increased both in domestic and international markets, Japanese producers will most likely take a conservative view in the construction of new capacity. All producers will turn their attention increasingly to high value-added specialty chemicals and advanced polymers. Competition in this market will be tough since foreign manufacturers along with non-chemical producers are entering the Japanese market. Joint development of new products with end-users and international producers is expected to increase. Japanese producers will also be following their end-user markets as production continues to shift overseas.