Acetic Acid

30 November 2018

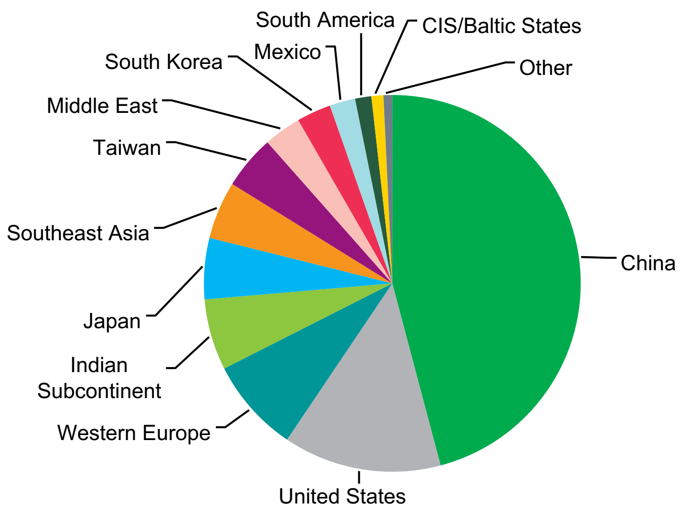
Abstract

Acetic acid is a commodity chemical produced primarily by the carbonylation of methanol. China accounts for 54% of world capacity, followed distantly by the United States, with 18% of world capacity. No other country accounts for more than 5% of capacity. China dominates production because of its vast coal-derived methanol production, which is the primary raw material for acetic acid.

Vinyl acetate monomer (VAM) is the largest end use for acetic acid, and is used in polymer manufacture for adhesives and coatings. VAM is followed by purified terephthalic acid (PTA), ethyl acetate, and acetic anhydride. PTA is used primarily for the manufacture of polyethylene terephthalate (PET) solid-state (packaging) resins, fibers, and films. Acetic anhydride is used primarily for cellulose flake production, and acetate esters are used mainly as solvents for inks, paints, and coatings. Other uses for acetic acid include monochloroacetic acid, butyl acetates, and ethanol.

The following pie chart shows world consumption of acetic acid:

World consumption of acetic acid—2018



Source: IHS Markit © 2018 IHS Markit

Growth for acetic acid will continue to be driven by the Chinese market. The largest end use for acetic acid in China is PTA, followed by VAM and ethyl acetate. Overall, Chinese consumption of acetic acid will grow strongly during the forecast period, led by continued strong demand for PTA.

In the United States, the leading application for acetic acid is VAM, followed distantly by acetic anhydride, PTA, and n-butyl acetate. Acetic acid consumption is forecast to continue growing, led by steady consumption for VAM.

Contacts

Koon-Ling Ring · Koon-Ling.ring@ihsmarkit.com
Maria deGuzman · Maria.deguzman@ihsmarkit.com

As in the United States, the largest end use for acetic acid in Western Europe is VAM, followed by acetic anhydride, ethyl acetate, and monochloroacetic acid and n-butyl acetate. Overall, growth during the forecast period will be strong, led by consumption for VAM.

Consumption on the Indian Subcontinent is also forecast to increase strongly during the forecast period. Consumption in this region is led by PTA, followed closely by ethyl acetate. In contrast to other regions, there is no consumption of acetic acid for VAM on the Indian Subcontinent. Overall growth will be strong for the forecast period.

Demand in most other regions (aside from Canada and Taiwan) is expected to increase during the forecast period, led by demand for VAM and PTA.

Over the coming five years, acetic acid demand is projected to further expand strongly, driven by incremental demand in developing countries, especially China and India. Vinyl acetate is expected to remain the single-largest outlet for acetic acid on a global basis. China will further enhance its world dominance, and should account for nearly half of global acetic acid consumption by 2023.

Contents

IHS Markit Customer Care

CustomerCare@ihsmarkit.com
Americas: +1 800 IHS CARE (+1 800 447 2273)
Europe, Middle East, and Africa: +44 (0) 1344 328 300
Asia and the Pacific Rim: +604 291 3600

IHS Markit™