

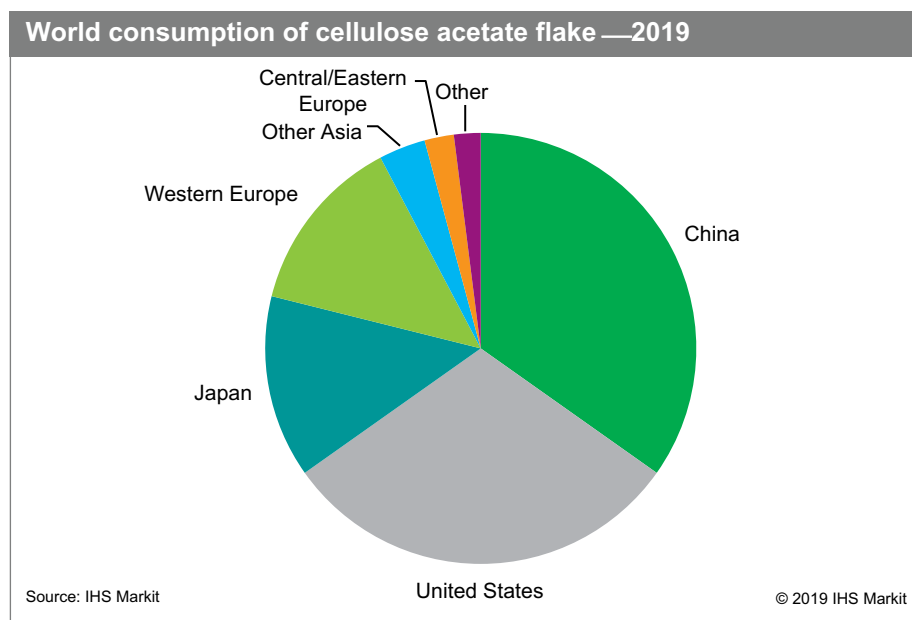
# Cellulose Acetate Flake

27 November 2019

## Abstract

Cellulose acetate flake is mostly consumed in one major application—the production of cellulose acetate fibers for conversion into cigarette filter tow and textile fibers. Cellulose acetate fibers account for the large majority of world consumption of cellulose acetate flake in 2019. Cellulose acetate molding and extrusion compounds, sheet, photographic film, coatings and inks, and cellulose triacetate for polarizer protection films used in liquid crystal displays (LCDs) account for the remainder.

The following pie chart shows world consumption of cellulose acetate flake:



World consumption of cellulose acetate flake declined from 2016 to 2019. Overall, cellulose acetate flake consumption will remain about the same. This will parallel global cigarette filter tow consumption, which is also expected to remain about the same.

The decrease in cellulose acetate cigarette filter tow demand is a result of declining global cigarette use and population of smokers. The negative health effects of smoking, the increase in public smoking bans in countries such as China and Russia, higher cigarette sales taxes, competition from electronic cigarettes (which mainly do not use any filters), and slowing economies are all leading to less cigarette use. Lower cigarette demand has resulted in closures of cigarette production factories and acetate tow plants. This has affected the cellulose acetate flake market.

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Cellulose acetate flake consumption for textile fibers is also expected to about the same, as most consumption is in apparel and home furnishings. Replacement by other textile fibers, especially polyester, has largely occurred. Global consumption of flake in coatings, plastics (molding and extrusion), film for liquid crystal displays, sheet, and so forth are expected to increase modestly. Higher growth will occur in China, as domestic demand for film used in the LCD industry will increase, although growth rates will be slower than previous years due to competition from other materials. Elsewhere, limited growth and even declines might take place for these markets due to replacement by other materials that offer better cost or performance. There will be a continued decline in photographic film use.

Future growth for use in filter tow (and thus, flake) may come from the promotion of longer filters to reduce tar and nicotine levels even further. Also, increasing production of filtered cigarettes in certain areas, or replacement of lower-quality filters with acetate filter tow would increase flake demand. However, increasing smoking regulations, public health concerns about smoking, and competition from electronic cigarettes may continue to limit filter tow (and thus, flake) use in the future.

Consumption of cigarette filter tow is nearly exclusively dependent on production of filtered cigarettes. It is expected that there will be continued declines in demand for cigarette filter tow in North America, Western Europe, and Japan, while filter tow demand in China (the largest global market) will only slightly increase.

For flake uses other than for cigarette acetate filter tow, growth could develop if demand for cellulose triacetate in polarizer protection films increases for LCDs. New applications will need to take advantage of characteristic properties of flake-based materials such as clarity, high-impact strength, being bio-based, and chemical and solvent resistance.

**For more detailed information, see the table of contents, shown below.**

**IHS Markit's Chemical Economics Handbook – Cellulose Acetate Flake** is the comprehensive and trusted guide for anyone seeking information on this industry. This latest report details global and regional information, including



Global summary;  
regional coverage



Producers with  
annual capacities  
and plant sites



Production figures  
and trends



Consumption and  
forecasts by end use  
application



Manufacturing  
processes and  
environmental issues



Trade – imports  
and exports

## Key Benefits

**IHS Markit's Chemical Economics Handbook – Cellulose Acetate Flake** has been compiled using primary interviews with key suppliers, organizations and leading representatives from the industry in combination with IHS Markit's unparalleled access to upstream and downstream market intelligence, expert insights into industry dynamics, trade and economics.

This report can help you:

- Identify trends and driving forces influencing chemical markets
- Forecast and plan for future demand
- Understand the impact of competing materials
- Identify and evaluate potential customers and competitors

- Evaluate producers
- Track changing prices and trade movements
- Analyze the impact of feedstocks, regulations, and other factors on chemical profitability

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