US exporters have found it difficult to raise export prices for acrylonitrile. Domestic prices for propylene feedstock are lower in October and this has not escaped the attentions of Asian importers. All indications suggest that export prices from the Americas are unchanged from a month ago, mostly below $1800/ton fob. New bids are at $1700/ton fob US Gulf coast, since the prospect of lower November prices in Asia is taking hold among traders. Growing Asian production of acrylonitrile has been cutting into US exports of the product all year. In the first six months of 2013, US exporters suffered a cut of more than 30% in volume.

Contract prices in Europe in October have essentially followed propylene prices to a reduction of €40/ton with very little discussion. Demand for acrylonitrile in West Europe was unexpectedly weak at the end of August, but a September demand allowed sellers to increase prices and raise their forecasts for the fourth quarter. Against this positive outlook, October business looks somewhat disappointing. There has been no real drop in business since September but nor has there been a significant upturn in volumes. Demand for spot material is understandably thin. Sellers mention T1 sales to Mediterranean customers at prices slightly higher than $1900/ton cfr, but volumes are thought to be low.

In Thailand, the joint venture acrylonitrile plant went down unexpectedly on 25 September and repair work there is expected to last until the end of October. Supply restraint among producers in Northeast Asia has helped to keep the market in balance and prevented any deterioration of acrylonitrile prices. Operating rates in Japan have been reduced in line with reduced demand for Japanese exports. It appears likely that Asahi Kasei and Mitsubishi Chemical will reduce and share new bids at $1700/ton fob US Gulf coast, since the prospect of lower November prices in Asia is taking hold among traders. Growing Asian production of acrylonitrile has been cutting into US exports of the product all year. In the first six months of 2013, US exporters suffered a cut of more than 30% in volume.

**Short-Term Price Trends**

Propylene and ammonia markets are weaker than expected for this time of year. The acrylonitrile trend is flat for now, but it could easily turn negative.