

# SMAP NEWSLETTER

September, 2021

Salt Manufacturers Association of Pakistan's Monthly Newsletter



**SALT MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION OF PAKISTAN** is a non profit organization instituted to represent and protect the rights and forward fair demands of salt manufacturing community through global representation.

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## Chairman's Message

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Pakistan is a country blessed with the world's second-largest salt deposit, estimated at 6.2 billion tons of Rock Salt reserves alone. The Pink Himalayan Salt, which is a preferred choice of people in the developed world, is a powerhouse of important nutrients other than Sodium Chloride like Magnesium that helps fight depression, Salt is also converted into value-added commercial products like lamps, scented candles, smoked salt, and even caustic soda and Soda ash that is extensively used by chemical industries in producing paper pulp, plastics, etc.

As the first Chairman of the Salt Manufacturers Association of Pakistan (SMAP), it is both a privilege as well as my moral duty to present the best that Pakistan has to offer in terms of salt to the world. From basic salt used in households for daily consumption, to cattle breeding and processing salt into chemicals for industrial usage – a mission that I have recently embarked on to achieve USD 2 billion for my motherland in annual exports.

The SMAP was founded on a vision to work closely with the government and other relevant trade bodies to make the Salt Industry globally competitive by resolving operational issues of the members, and by helping them adapt world-class best practices and technology to augment the quality of output. We understand that the Government has put an all-out effort to get the Pink Himalayan Salt tagged as a Geographical Indicator (GI), and the SMAP shall undoubtedly act as a catalyst in materializing these efforts as we have all the key stakeholders with us.

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**For the salt sector to achieve real-time growth, it is pertinent that a strong association is formed that can provide the necessary tools and support to enable the industry players to adapt to the ever-changing dynamics of the global economy, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19.**

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## Chairman's Message

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We must realize that despite the incredible potential that Pakistan has and supplies salt and its products to the entire world, it still does not fall in the category of Top 20 Salt Exporters.

I firmly believe that the SMAP will serve as a viable, effective, and progressive advocacy forum that shall help give a new impetus to our innate salt industry and rebrand our salt to the world at market competitive pricing.

During my tenure as chairman, I assure you that SMAP shall commit to playing a pivotal role in upgrading the salt industry of Pakistan by effectively engaging with the private and public sectors to achieve the **'Make in Pakistan'** objective.

SMAP is well placed and geared to take the lead in the production of value-added products from salt directly or as a by-product or a co-product and for these, researches are underway to develop the local industry by equipping them with the latest trends in the field of value-added production of chemicals from salt.

It is a humble dream to see all the members of SMAP at least produce one extra product other than the basic Sodium Chloride to bring our country out of the current balance of payments quagmire and play their part in the Nation-building initiative of the Honorable Prime Minister of Pakistan and his Commerce team.



**Mr. Ismail Suttar**

**Chairman, SMAP**





## From the Desk of TDAP

**Tayyaba Iftikhar Butt**

**Product Officer (Salt)**

**Assistant Director, Agro & Food Division**

**Trade Development Authority of Pakistan**

Salt is a developing sector in Pakistan. The Salt Value Chain requires documentation and this is possible only with collaboration with the Salt Manufacturers Association of Pakistan. The first-ever Salt Association was formed by the untiring efforts of Salt exporters and Product Office (Salt) at the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan. The association is a legal body that provides a platform for salt stakeholders to come together and engage in debate on key issues concerning the supply chain. The platform is also used to build consensus on policy-level interventions that are then communicated to the policymakers at the helm of affairs. SMAP is a leading salt exporter and manufacturers in Pakistan.

Salt is one of the products listed in the Prime Minister's Economic Outreach Initiative for 2021-2022. One of the key responsibilities under this initiative is salt promotion and marketing in various destinations across the globe. The aim is to diversify the product range, as well as expand the markets that remain untapped or mildly touched by this sector. TDAP is the premium government organization mandated to perform these duties.

TDAP stands for everything that strengthens the sector. Its mission of developing and promoting export holistically. In collaboration with SMAP, TDAP has arranged and planned digital events, B2Bs, and webinars for knowledge transfer and one-to-one interaction with the business community abroad. A large number of projects are initiated at TDAP to support and accelerate the development of export-oriented sectors. For instance, this year for the first time TDAP has formally invited salt exporters to participate in International Exhibitions on TDAP subsidized rates. This activity is estimated to increase the exposure of Pakistani salt companies by providing them an opportunity to display their products at first-class food & beverages fairs and trade shows. Similarly, TDAP made arrangements to display Salt products at Wagah Display Center, one of the places most visited by foreign dignitaries in Pakistan.

Salt exports from Pakistan have seen a rapid increase in the past few years, especially from 2015 onwards, however, in order to keep the returns sustainable incoming 3-4 years, various new projects have been launched. TDAP's Salt Campaign is one such project that will be rolled out in November 2021. Salt gifts will be sent to more than 10 destinations across the globe to introduce and promote Pakistani Pink Rock Salt products to the world. TDAP looks forward to working closely with SMAP for the development of the Salt sector in Pakistan.



# Condolences to Member's Families

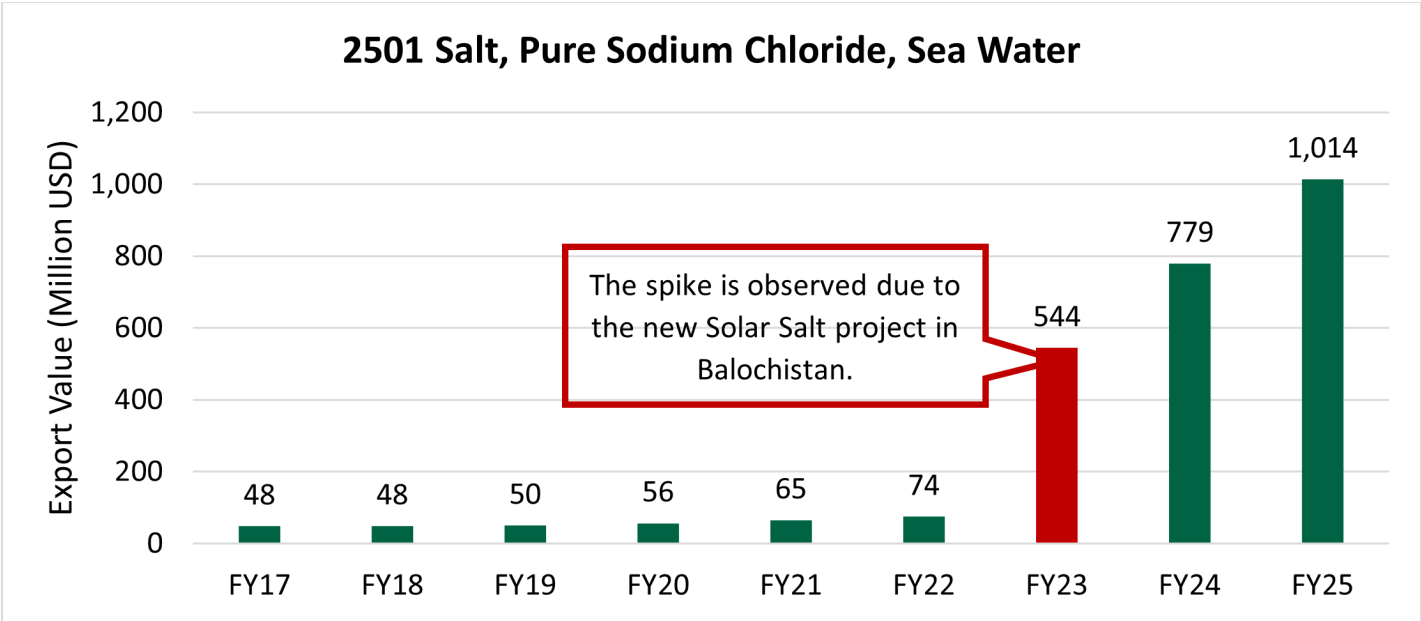
SMAP community mourns the death of Mr. Bhatti Sahab's wife and Mr. Mohammad Khan Sahab's son. We on behalf of Salt Manufacturers Association of Pakistan extend our deepest condolences to their family and friends. In this moment of grief, we must come together as a community and be there for each other.



## Retrospect: A Look Back at Previous Years & Projecting Future

Pakistan has seen steady growth in the salt sector especially with the strike of the first wave of Covid-19, Salt industry absorbed the shock and responded tremendously. In 2020, Salt exports were valued at USD 65 million and exports mainly consisted of salt and pure sodium chloride. Exports valuation have an increase of 13% against the previous year's figure. Over the period under review, exports enjoyed a prominent increase. Exports peaked in 2020 and are likely to continue growing in years to come.

With the initiative of the world's largest solar salt project in the province of Balochistan, the export value will be increased by USD 470 million in the first phase and will continue to grow with the addition of USD 235 million annually.



## Sales Tax Returns

During the meeting with the honorable Advisor Commerce and Investment Mr. Abdul Razak Dawood, a request was put forward by SMAP on behalf of the entire salt sector regarding the imposition of sales tax on raw salt in the Financial Budget 2021, the minister assured the delegation of the Salt Manufacturers Association of his all-out help in this matter and connected SMAP with the team of FBR.

In the virtual meeting with the FBR in the presence of senior management of the Ministry of Commerce, it has been clarified by the SMAP team that this imposition of GST will adversely affect the salt trade especially at a time when the exports are growing. Due to this imposition, we have already seen a dip in exports which was otherwise projected at a 20% increase in growth for the financial year of 21-22.

It is important to note that in the recent budget serial no29 of the sixth schedule has been omitted under the sunset clause which previously gave the benefit to the early tiers of the supply chain to supply salt on the exempt basis in loose form. However, serial number 107 is still there which allows the sale and import of salt if it is iodized. Since there is a law in place in Pakistan due to which there is a complete ban on the production and supply of non-iodized salt to the food sector including consumer sales at the retail level. The removal of serial number 29 will not affect the edible salt market.

SMAP has requested the MOC, as well as FBR to reconsider the withdrawal of serial number 29 from the sixth schedule and at least give three years to the salt supply chain sector which is in a state of shock at the moment as most business activities are at a standstill since the majority of the supply chain belongs to the undocumented sector and is causing a loss to Pakistan's exports.



Mining activities are also reduced to the bare minimum with 30% of the mines already shut down due to low demand pertaining to the imposition of GST to a sector that was not ready.

The sudden implementation of this step has increased the unemployment ratio in this sector. It has been requested to consider the timelines and provide atleast three years of breathing space required by this industry to fully come into the tax net for which SMAP is ready to sit with the tax authorities and device a strategy with confirmed commitments.

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## Increasing Shipping Cost

### Haunting Exports Growth

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The freight costs have skyrocketed to 300% in 2021. Salt exporters are burdened by this sudden increase in freight costs and pass along the extra costs to consumers.

The situation is worsening for Small and Medium-size Enterprises (SMEs) as they try to navigate their business amidst the global pandemic. The covid-19 lockdown has resulted in ports being closed in parts of China making it hard for salt exporters in Pakistan to import packaging material for salt products.

To add to their problems, there is a shortage of containers available worldwide. Pakistani exporters are constantly complaining to relevant authorities regarding the long wait time to find shipping containers. Some salt exporters consider themselves to be lucky if they find a container within three weeks while other salt exporters have to wait up to two months to find a container.





# Shortage of Salt in China and India

## An Opportunity for SMAP Member Companies



The government of Pakistan needs to provide constant support to salt Manufacturers and exporters to increase their salt production in order to meet the growing demand for salt in India and China. Currently, as an aftermath of cyclones and unprecedented rainfall, there is an acute shortage of salt in India and China.

Salt production in Gujarat city in India and Zhengzhou city in china is severely affected by Covid-19 Lockdown and excessive rainfall. In these areas, most of the salt consumers are turning to the black market that is offering salt at exorbitant prices.

This year, Pakistan has experienced good reserves in the salt lakes due to low monsoon rains. Salt exporters with the help of the government need to provide instant support to neighboring countries China and India as well as their customers like Vietnam and South Korea during this difficult period.

Quick support to India and China can provide employment opportunities to thousands that are severely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Moreover, Pakistan has great potential to marginalize the trade gap and gain economic stability through enhanced trade volumes. The only help needed is the priority availability for vessel space as well as containers for shipping of salt.



## Amazon Comes to Pakistan and What It Means for Local Salt Sellers?

Pakistani Salt Sellers have yet to realize their true potential. The first step for the growth of salt Manufacturers is to attend TDAP training sessions to get useful insights on account registration, product listing, payment procedure and logistics strategies.

With Amazon coming to Pakistan, salt sellers can reach new heights by selling salt products at competitive prices in the international market by showcasing their products on international platform. This will result in an increase in revenue earned by Salt exporters.

In addition to listing local salt products on Amazon, another added benefit is that Pakistan has applied for the registration of **Pink Himalayan Salt GI Tag** which means the Pink Himalayan Salt will be branded as a product coming from the Pakistani origin.

Pakistan can make salt products competitive in the international markets by investing heavily in upgrading machinery, meeting packaging standards and keeping aside a good portion of funds to market their product in international markets.



## SMAP Initiates Pilot Study on Lithium Production at Salt Mines in Pakistan

Lithium batteries powers phones, laptops, electric cars, etc. The demand for lithium has increased rapidly due to global consumption which has risen by 8.9 percent annually. This demand will continue to intensify as electric vehicles are seen as a future possible solution to minimize carbon footprint.

The lithium triangle comprises Chile, Argentina, and Bolivia. 75% of the world's supply of lithium is stored in these areas beneath their salt flats.

The precipitation method is usually used to extract lithium from brine. Holes are drilled into the salt flats and the brine is pumped to the surface, leaving it to evaporate in ponds. This allows lithium carbonate to be extracted through a chemical process. The procedure is time-consuming, lasting from 18 to 24 months.



Lithium extraction from brine is economical and effective as compared to solid lithium mining from its mineral Spodumene.

Study shows that salt lakes in Pakistan are rich in Lithium content and after salt extraction from concentrated brine, the bitters are disposed off in landfills causing a huge untouched potential worth of billions of US dollars to be discredited and discarded.

Pakistan has a capacity to produce 3-5 million tonnes of lithium per annum, currently priced at 10,000-12,000 USD per tonne.

Salt Manufacturers Association of Pakistan is developing an indigenous process which will be shared with members in large to enter into the production of Lithium Carbonate. This will be a new industry that will highlight Pakistan on the world map in years to come.



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## SMAP Plans to Work on Production of Sulphate of Potash (SOP)

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SMAP is initiating research on the production of SOP which is possible to coparticipant in the various solar salt operations as practiced in the rest of the developed world.

There are a variety of geologic potassium salt deposits around the world, most of which are located in Russia and Belarus and are ranked as the second and third highest potash producers.

In the United States, 85% of potash is imported from Canada, with the remaining produced in Michigan, New Mexico, and Utah.

In the international market, SOPs are mainly produced from brines. and is converted into a variety of potassium fertilizers such as Potassium Sulphate or Potassium Chloride In addition, a small amount of high-purity industrial-grade material is also produced.

Both contain essential nutrients required by all crops. Sulfate of Potash (SOP) has a very high potassium content which makes it ideal for encouraging strong flower and fruit development. In addition, it also helps to ripen and strengthen plants ensuring they can defend against pests, disease, and weather damage.

Potassium sulfate is often preferred over potassium chloride for some chloride-sensitive crops such as potatoes, tobacco, some vegetables and fruits, some tree crops like almonds, walnuts, and citrus.

Currently, Pakistan is importing exceedingly large amounts of potassium sulfate from India and other parts of the world. It is accounted that in the year 2019, 56,820 tonnes of potassium sulphate was imported.

The local Production of Potassium Sulphate will benefit farmers and other industrial consumers with readily available and cost-effective product for their use. This initiative will also support rapid industrialization based on supply-demand and will automatically minimize unemployment issues in Pakistan and will put forth our country among major chemical-producing nations around the globe.

As demand for food continues to rise, potassium deficiency is becoming more widespread around the globe, and a recovering agriculture industry bolsters planting. Hence, potash fertilizer will likely hit record demand worldwide.

With a flurry of activity around new projects and upgrades, if this industry is well tapped by Pakistan then it will meet the growing demand for SOP fertilizers abroad.

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# New Research Supports Current Levels of Salt Intake

One of the most prestigious medical journals, **"The Lancet"** features a new study which shows, that for the majority of people there is no health benefit from a low salt diet and there is no harm from the intake average salt dose for most people around the world today.

The research on "Urinary sodium excretion, blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, and mortality: a community-level prospective epidemiological cohort study" was carried out by Dr. Andrew Mente of MacMaster University along with other renowned researchers around the Globe.

In this study, there were 95,000 participants whose salt intake and health were monitored for an average period of eight years. The effects of sodium and potassium intake on blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, and mortality were closely monitored.



This research study found out that people around the world consume a healthy range of sodium consumption which ranges between 3,000 and 5,000mg per day. People who consumed salt at a higher-end than the stated range had better health outcomes and very few incidences of a heart attack were reported. Overall there was a positive effect of increased potassium consumption, noting that "All major cardiovascular outcomes decreased with increasing potassium intake in all countries."







## Is It Wise to Increase Your Salt Intake By 100 Percent?

### Experts Say You Can Double Your Daily Intake

Salt crystals are translucent, cubic in shape, and odorless but have a distinct taste. The presence of impurities in salt gives salt different colors such as pink, white, red, brown, black, and grey.

In households and restaurants, salt is used in almost every dish and has become one of the most common ingredients. Salt is known by a variety of names such as rock salt or table salt. Most of the salt is composed of sodium and chlorine. Sodium is a necessary nutrient for human body. It's one of the body's electrolytes necessary to maintain blood pressure and absorb vital nutrients in our cells. Salt is naturally found in seawater, oceans, and lakes.

Research studies have shown that daily consumption of six grams of table salt displays a positive effect on wellbeing and is considered safe to consume such levels. This is due to the fact that sodium in salt helps to maintain normal fluid balance and plays a vital role in maintaining healthy nerve and muscle function.





## Therapeutic Benefits of Salt

### Most People Around the Globe are Installing Saltwater Pools

Due to global warming, temperatures have increased by more than 1.6 degrees Fahrenheit since 1906. Hottest temperatures are recorded around the globe due to which people are scurrying to swimming pools filled with salt water. The salt swimming pools were first developed in Australia and offers several advantages compared to conventional chlorine pools.

People no longer have to bear the eye burning, damaged hair, nose-curdling sting that results from chlorine. Finding enough chlorine tablets to clean pools is not on people's radar these days.

For swimmers, salt pools enhance the swimming experience because it gives water a soft feeling.

In addition, very low chlorine levels in salt pools mean that colored hair over a period of time wouldn't be that much damaged as it does in chlorinated pools. Most importantly, personal exposure to chlorine and its by-products that has potential health risks are reduced.

Moreover, pool owners, today don't have to purchase, store and handle harsh chemicals. Therefore, the maintenance is much easier, more convenient, and saves time and money.



## Salt Keeps You Hydrated When You Exercise

A huge chunk of youth is motivated to start an exercise and keep their bodies healthy. Whether it's joining clubs or hiring a personal trainer, everyone wants to increase their physical activity in order to maintain fitness and improve their overall wellbeing.

Even though only a few people attain the fitness of an all-star athlete, we can all benefit from an increase in the level of physical activity. Besides workout, it is important to stay hydrated, especially during summers.

During exercise the body's metabolism works at a much higher rate, breaking down and regenerating tissues and creating waste metabolites that need to be flushed out of the system. This is the reason why it is universally recommended to drink great amounts of water during working out.

**Low sodium levels can cause dehydration, muscles cramps or even organ failure.**



But you need more than just water to keep your body properly hydrated. Research study suggests that it's better to replace sodium and potassium along with water. This is why athletes competing in Olympics drink sports water rather than mineral water. Also, deficiency in sodium levels can lead to hypo-natremia which is a potentially fatal condition.

## **Abstract**

### **The Predictors of High Dietary Salt Intake among Hypertensive Patients in Iran**

Background. Hypertension and its complications are among the major health problems all over the world, particularly in developing countries. The aims of this study were to show that, whether the hypertensive patients follow the expertise recommendations and differences between men and women in their levels of knowledge and behavior in salt taking.

**International Journal of Hypertension, 2020**  
**<https://doi.org/10.1155/2020/6748696>**

### **Method:**

The present cross-sectional study was conducted among all hypertensive patients in rural health centers of Tabriz, Iran, in Feb–May; 2016. Data were collected by an interviewer-administrated questionnaire, along with anthropometric, blood pressure, and 24-hour urinary sodium excretion measurements. Multivariate logistic regression analysis was used to compute adjusted odds ratio (OR). In all 205 patients, 62.9% female, 40.5% aged over 60 years, and 53.7% with low or moderate socioeconomic status, 49.3% body mass index (BMI) 30 kg/m<sup>2</sup> and above, 10.2% of the patients had systolic/diastolic equal and above ( $\geq$ ) 40/90 mmHg, participated in the study.

### **Conclusion:**

The different pattern of salt intake was observed between men and women. In general, the amount of salt taken by hypertensive patients is higher than recommended allowances. Both men and women add extra amount of salt to food, women when preparing food and men at the table. Salt intake level both during preparing and eating food may be associated with occupation (unemployed), blood pressure level (systolic /diastolic  $\geq$ 140/90), sex (men), age (54–59), and also patient knowledge (general)



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The Newsletter welcomes feedback, new information, and relevant articles on all aspects on salt industry.

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