

Most Makers Hold Hue Set Production

NEW YORK, May 22.—Altho the Radio Corporation of America, Westinghouse and Emerson optically plunged into production of 15-inch tube color sets early this year, most of the manufacturers have been reluctant to enter the rainbow receiver race, preferring to wait until it's possible to put out a 19 or 21-inch color set which sells from \$500 to \$600. Not until then, they reason, will color TV become a mass medium factor.

Du Mont unveiled a 19-inch color tube set this month, which it expects to have in production this fall. The set will sell at \$1,000, the price of RCA's currently offered 15-inch model. However, Du Mont says it will be two or three years until the price can be shaved down to the \$500-\$600 price range. Most of the other manufacturers concur with this estimate.

Meanwhile, RCA, which is going ahead full blast with a big color set merchandising campaign, reports that its first production run of 15-inch tube color receivers was nearly sold out less than a month after they first hit the market. In line with this, RCA Executive Veepee Joseph B. Elliott predicts the demand for color TV sets will exceed the supply during 1954 and 1955.

Westinghouse Sets

Westinghouse, first to put color sets on the market, reports 50 to 60 sets sold to consumers in 15 major markets where they've been offered since March 1. Emerson's color set rental plan hasn't been too successful so far, but President Ben Abrams said he would continue rentals until mass production of larger color screens becomes feasible.

The Emerson sets are leased to dealers, who in turn sub-lease them to consumers at a \$75 monthly rental fee, with the \$200 rental charge for the first month to cover delivery and installation.

With about 95 cities due to have color this year, industry experts predict a top production ceiling of 150,000 color TV sets, with 50,000 to 70,000 set sales anticipated for 1954.

By 1958, they estimate, 10,200,000 color receivers will have been sold over the five-year period, or about one-third as many black and white sets now in use.

Even if a production battle develops unexpectedly this year in the tint TV sets industry, supplies of material used in color picture tubes will be ample, according to the U. S. Department of Interior.

RCA this year plans to turn out 5,000 of its 15-inch tube color sets

(screen size equivalent to a 12½-inch black and white receiver) and a similar number of 19-inch color tube models (equivalent of a 17-inch black and white set).

The latter are due to hit the market this fall. Suggested price on the 15 incher is \$1,000, but no tag has been set on the 19-inch set yet. Altho RCA has said there will be no stockpiling of color sets this year, its Bloomington, Ind., plant is tooled to turn out 2,000 color sets a month if the demand warrants.

Stromberg-Carlson began color set production May 1 on a "very limited schedule," with sets retailing at about \$1,000, while Crosley has delayed its color production start beyond August, awaiting further improvement of the Lawrence one-gun tube.

Zenith says it will not market color sets at all until the one-gun tube is perfected. CBS-Columbia is readying its new CBS-Color-tron 205 color tube said to provide a considerably larger screen than the current 15 incher) for the market this fall.

Other Makers

Most of the other manufacturers have made up a few hundred 15-inch color tube models for loan to distributors and demonstration. Aside from this token production, tho, they are all shooting for bigger screens.

Manufacturers with 15-inch pilot set on hand include: Admiral, Bendix, Philharmonic (Motorola), Sentinel, Arvin, Capehart-Farnsworth, General Electric, Hallcrafters, Olympic, Raytheon, Sperton, Stewart-Warner, Hoffman, Philco, Sears, Roebuck (Silver-tone), Sylvania, Stromberg-Carlson, Zenith, Du Mont, CBS-Columbia, Crosley, Emerson, Westinghouse and RCA.