

RCA 21-Inch Color TV in Production

TWENTY-ONE-INCH color television sets for the home entered commercial production at the Bloomington, Ind., plant of the RCA Victor Television Division with the closing of color television's introductory year of 1954.

The start of commercial set production in the 21-inch size was announced on Dec. 6 by Henry G. Baker, Vice-President and General Manager of the division, shortly after the disclosure that RCA's 21-inch color TV picture tube had become commercially available to TV set manufacturers and had reached a mid-November production rate of 100 tubes a day at the Lancaster, Pa., plant of the RCA Tube Division.

Limited quantities of the new RCA Victor 21-inch color set were scheduled for shipment to distributors in late December, becoming available in dealer stores during January, Mr. Baker announced. The set, providing a viewing area of 255 square inches—about 25 per cent greater than that of any color set previously available—bears a suggested retail price of \$895.

Describing the introduction of the 21-inch receiver as a significant step toward the ultimate establishment of a nation-wide color television service, Mr. Baker said that RCA Victor is planning only limited quantity production initially, with emphasis on quality rather than quantity. He emphasized that intensive work is still under way, with the objective of achieving further cost reduction.

"We are striving to produce our quality color receivers, at a price within the reach of the greatest number of consumers," he said. "While we have no doubt that this objective will be reached, it will take time and further simplification of production methods to achieve it. Because of these facts, we do not foresee large mass production of color receivers in 1955."

Pre-Production Models Tested

During November, a small quantity of pre-production models of the 21-inch color sets were placed in operation at distributors' establishments for demonstration purposes.

"The successful results of these demonstrations as well as our own field tests give us reason to be extremely enthusiastic about the progress we have made in commercial color receiver developments," Mr. Baker said. "We believe these developments will contribute importantly to the orderly transition over the next few years to a nation-wide color television service, with a steadily increasing demand for color receivers.

"The likelihood of this orderly transition will be enhanced by the experience gained as successive models are introduced and by creating an expanding consumer demand through the industry's continuing efforts to achieve lower production costs, resulting in lower prices to the consumer."

As a result of engineering improvements in the convergence and focusing circuits, making possible greater accuracy and increased stability, the control knobs for these functions on the new set have now been removed from the side of the cabinet and placed inside as an adjustment for service technicians only.

Two control knobs for black-and-white are in standard position on the front of the cabinet of the new set, with color controls located behind a decorative shield. Initially, the console will be available only in mahogany finish. The dimensions of the set are 42½ inches height, 27½ inches width, and 27⅞ inches depth.

Tube Price Reduced to \$100

Announcement of a reduction in the price of the RCA 21-inch color television picture tube from \$175 to \$100 was made on January 11 by W. Walter Watts,



Skilled hands insert RCA 21-inch color picture tube in a receiver on the production line.



High voltage power supplies are assembled for use in new 21-inch RCA Victor color sets.

Executive Vice-President, Electronic Products, Radio Corporation of America.

"This 43 per cent reduction to television set manufacturers in the price of the RCA color tube is another major step initiated by RCA toward the establishment of a nation-wide color television service," Mr. Watts said. "This reduction is made possible by RCA manufacturing techniques recently achieved which permit substantial economies in the production of the tube. These accomplishments confirm the basic soundness of the round metal design developed by RCA color tube engineers.

"The picture tube is the heart of color television. RCA is confident that its present type 21-inch color tube is the best and most economical answer to the problem of moving color television 'off the ground' and into the market. This confidence is based on our experience in manufacturing thousands of these tubes, as well as our experience with these tubes in nation-wide field tests and in actual use in the homes of those who have purchased the RCA 21-inch color sets. Current demand for these sets exceeds the supply."

Mr. Watts said that the price reduction on the 21-inch color tube is further evidence of RCA's determina-

tion to move ahead in color television, steadily and constructively.

"RCA will continue to carry out its previously announced plans for manufacturing color tubes and color receivers for the home, as well as for broadcasting color programs," he emphasized. "It is RCA's hope that this substantial price reduction on color picture tubes will encourage competing manufacturers in the industry to go into production promptly in the field of color television."

The announcement regarding the RCA 21-inch round color tube, Mr. Watts said, follows a careful engineering and cost analysis of the 22-inch rectangular color picture tube, which has been reported as being near the production stage.

"RCA has also produced this type of color tube, and has conducted extensive tests of the 22-inch rectangular tube alongside the 21-inch round color tube," Mr. Watts said. "We have carefully evaluated the characteristics of both tubes operating under identical conditions. As a result, we see no advantages in the 22-inch rectangular tube. It does not produce better color, and it does not provide a larger picture than the RCA 21-inch round color tube. Furthermore, the 22-inch rectangular color tube is more costly to manufacture, and it may never be as economical to produce as the RCA 21-inch round color tube."

Mr. Watts added:

"Moreover, our 21-inch round color tube is now in actual production and already has passed through the initial stages involved in the manufacture of any new product, while the 22-inch rectangular color tube has yet to meet and solve the problems inherent in these early stages. In other words, the 21-inch round color tube is here today while the 22-inch rectangular tube is only a promise for the future."

New Communications Center

Employees of RCA Communications, Inc., in San Francisco, have recently moved into a newly-built, modern Pacific Coast Headquarters and Central Radio Office building on Market Street.

The four-story building, with its gleaming façade of gray-green ceramic tile blocks separating rows of aluminum framed windows, serves as the Pacific Gateway for RCA Communications, Inc. This office, with the support of branch facilities and the transmitting and receiving stations located north of San Francisco, handles the bulk of all telegraphic communications to and from points throughout the Pacific and Far Eastern areas.