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1950—A Boll Weevil Year?

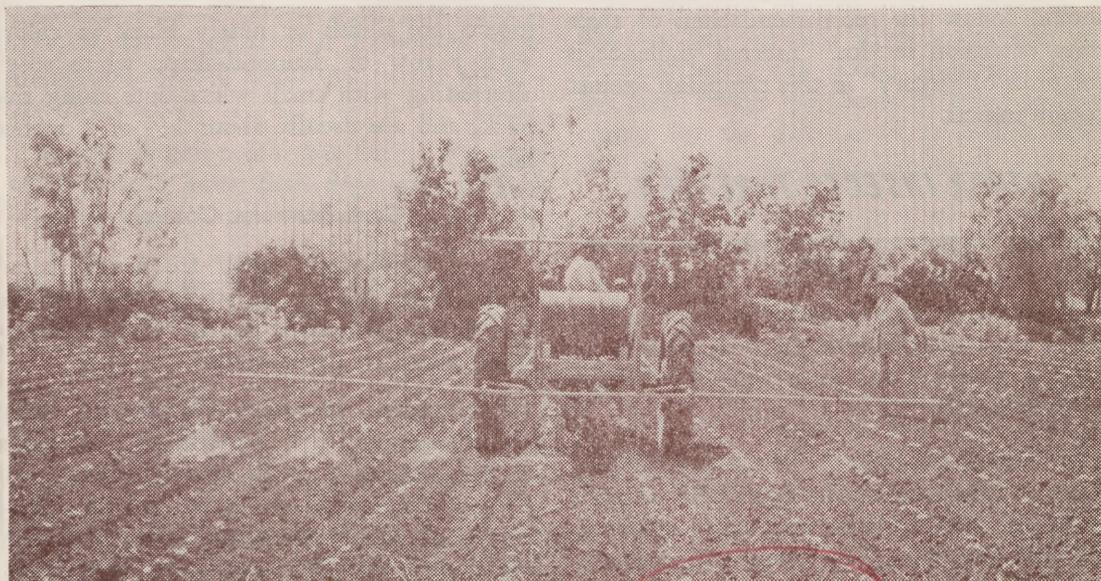
Warnings that the population of cotton insects may be unusually large in 1950 continue to be heard in every corner of the Cotton Belt. A note of realism is added to these warnings by the unusually heavy infestations of thrips in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas and the greatest number of weevils per acre in ground trash in March at certain northern Louisiana points since surveys were started in 1936.

Texas entomologists have repeatedly warned that conditions in that State point to heavy infestations of cotton insects in 1950. Weather conditions since last fall have been unusually favorable for the building up of large insect populations this season.

Thanks to the new, more powerful, and more effective insecticides, modern machinery, and the increased knowledge of insect control methods, this potential danger to the 1950 cotton crop may be largely averted. The methods are known and the materials are at hand, but they must be applied to be effective.

Early season application of poisons and community-wide action are two of the most effective methods of combating cotton insects.

Under the early season control program two or three applications of dusts or sprays should be made at approximately 7-day intervals. The first application should be made at



In tests near Waco last year early season insect poisoning hastened the fruiting and maturity of the cotton by approximately 3 weeks and, also, increased average production of lint cotton per acre by 237 pounds and net profit \$54.42 per acre.

the usual chopping time or when the cotton is in the 4-leaf stage. Early season poisoning not only reduces the damage to the young cotton plant by thrips, aphids, and fleahoppers but also is the most effective method of killing off weevils that survived the winter.

Allen C. Gunter, associate extension entomologist of Texas A. & M. College, in emphasizing the importance of early season poisoning, reminds growers that the last application of early season poisoning should be made before blooms appear or 30 days before the time that bollworms usually appear. This is necessary in order that the population of beneficial insects can build up and provide protection against bollworms later in the season. In many instances, the use of early or presquare poisoning has permitted maturity of the crop before bollworms appeared.

Community-wide action is necessary to prevent weevil populations from building up on untreated fields and migrating later to all fields throughout the community. Growers are urged to consult their county agricultural agents for details on early season control and a plan for community-wide action. Whether or not a community plan is in effect, farmers should follow the recommendations of their state extension service. "Eternal vigilance is the price of victory" in this campaign against cotton insects.

OTHER INSECTS THREATEN

Severe Screwworm Outbreak May Occur in 1950

Screwworm flies apparently are starting their most destructive year, according to United States Department of Agriculture entomologists.

It is reported that the entire central portion of Texas—from the Lower Rio Grande Valley to the Oklahoma state line—is heavily infested and that large numbers of screwworms have survived the winter in the southern portions of Arizona and New Mexico.

Farmers and ranchers are urged to use the following 3-point control program to prevent

losses of livestock and to retard the spread of screwworm flies:

1. Inspect all livestock twice each week. Treat all wounds with Smear 62, whether infested or not.
2. During warm weather, avoid dehorning, branding, marking, castrating, or other operations leaving wounds. If such operations are absolutely essential, keep the animals under close observation and treat wounds at regular intervals until healed.
3. Examine animals carefully before they are shipped and treat all wounds found.

Control of Tent Caterpillars

Forest tent caterpillars can be controlled by spraying the trees when the caterpillars first appear with a mixture of 4 pounds of 50-percent DDT wettable powder and 100 gallons of water. For smaller amounts, use 4 tablespoons of the powder to 1 gallon of water.

These caterpillars are especially fond of the leaves of oak, elm, gum, and poplar trees and frequently strip them completely. The insects are bluish or nearly black in color, with a row of diamond-shape white spots alternating with small white dots along the back, and are usually about 1½ or 2 inches long.

Corn Earworm Control

Corn earworms, which frequently cause considerable damage in sweet corn, can be controlled, according to the United States Department of Agriculture.

Department specialists recommend spray applications of DDT, mineral oil, and water on the silks and husks of developing ears. Two or three applications are usually necessary—the first being made when the first silks appear and the second and third applications following at 2-day intervals.

For power sprayers, the entomologists recommend 3 quarts of 25-percent DDT emulsifiable concentrate and 2½ gallons of white

mineral oil diluted with water to make 25 gallons of spray. This will cover about 1 acre of sweet corn. The cost of spraying is estimated at from \$3 to \$5 per acre for each application.

For home gardens, use 1 quart of mineral oil, 1 teaspoonful of B-1956 emulsifying agent, 1/3 pint of 25-percent emulsifiable DDT, and water to make 1 gallon of spray. Directions for mixing are as follows:

"Add the teaspoonful of B-1956 emulsifying agent to the quart of tasteless mineral oil and stir thoroughly. Next, add the 1/3 pint of 25-percent emulsifiable DDT and stir thoroughly. Add slowly 1 pint of water to the mixture and mix until a creamy emulsion is formed. Now add slowly enough water to bring the volume of the spray mixture up to 1 gallon."

FALL MILK PRODUCTION MOST PROFITABLE

Milk prices are usually highest during October, November, December, and January and lowest during May, June, and July, according to a study prepared by J. Z. Rowe, New Mexico Agricultural Extension Service economist, and illustrated in the accompanying chart.

Mr. Rowe points out that during the years 1910-49 milk prices from September to February averaged almost 6 percent higher than

those from March through August. A brief survey of similar data for the years 1935-39 in Texas shows a difference of 10 percent in favor of the fall period.

This seasonal variation in milk prices occurs because the volume of milk produced fluctuates from season to season, while the consumers' demand for milk remains relatively constant throughout the year. Lush spring pastures, plus the fact that most farmers have their cows freshen in the spring, boost milk production at that time of year.

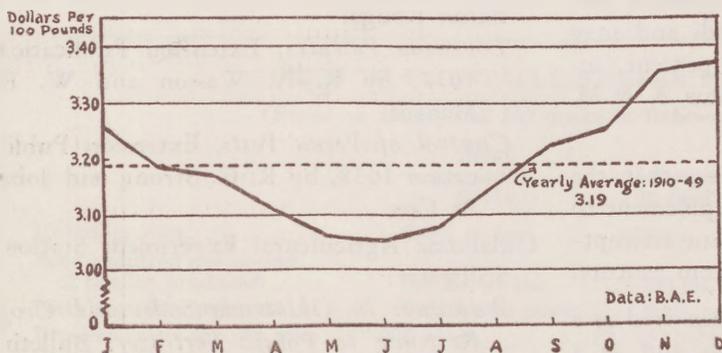
Dairymen who manage their herds so that a large percentage of their cows freshen in the fall are able to take advantage of the 6 to 10 percent higher milk price during the fall months.

Such a plan necessitates the development of a pasture program that will provide for abundant pasture feed during the fall and winter months and the production of sufficient supplementary hay and silage. This is neither difficult nor expensive in most areas of the Southwest if grasses and legumes that are most productive during this season are planted.

Breeding for heaviest milk production in the late fall not only gives maximum production during the period of highest prices but also brings the heaviest labor load in caring for the dairy cows at a time when field work is usually at a minimum.

Dairymen who also produce cotton may find it desirable to manage their herd so that most of the cows freshen immediately after cotton harvest.

As costs of feed and other items in the production of milk increase and the pressure for lower milk prices becomes stronger, dairymen who give attention to these seasonal variations in prices may find this one factor to be the difference between profit and loss in their operations.



Seasonality of monthly average wholesale prices received by farmers for 100 pounds of milk in New Mexico, 1910-49.

PROFITABLE PASTURES

Pastures for Hogs Reduce Feed Costs

Good pasture can save from 10 to 20 percent of the necessary grains and concentrates in a hog ration, says A. A. Heidebrecht, Oklahoma A. & M. College swine specialist.

Pasture is of special value for growing pigs because it is rich in protein, calcium, and Vitamins A and B, which are nutritive elements that are frequently lacking in cereal grains.

Brood sows can usually be carried on pasture alone if they are also given free access to a mineral mixture and to water. The saving in feed costs obtained through the use of pasture for growing and fattening pigs—using average prices—is estimated to be about \$50 for each acre of pasture. Measured in quantities of feed, this would be about 1,000 pounds of corn and 400 pounds of tankage.

In addition to saving feed, the green, succulent feed of good pastures and the exercise the hogs get when kept on pastures aid greatly in keeping the animals healthy. From the standpoint of sanitation and control of parasites, such as stomach worms, pastures are indispensable in the hog program.

Any of the grasses, legumes, or pasture mixtures, as well as small grains, are suitable for hog pasture.

Pastures for Poultry

Green feed for poultry insures that the flock receive vitamins and trace minerals frequently deficient in poultry feeds and may reduce feed costs as much as 10 percent, according to Joe P. Davis, Oklahoma A. & M. College poultryman.

Mr. Davis points out, however, that the green feed should be used as a supplement to a good ration of grain, rather than attempting to supply all of the feed from pasture.

In addition to the value of green feed as a source of vitamins and minerals and as a saving of substantial feed costs, pastures for poultry also provide large amounts of high-quality protein. Moreover, flocks given plenty

of green feed are seldom bothered with feather-picking and cannibalism.

New Pastures for Old

Pasture specialists of Louisiana State University offer timely suggestions for making new pastures out of old ones.

Number 1 on their list is to lime the soil if tests show that it is needed. The second step is to tear up the old sod with a disk, field cultivator, or spring-tooth harrow. Very shallow plowing can be substituted for this step, but it is best to work up the soil without plowing, if possible, to facilitate the third step, which is the preparation of a smooth, firm seedbed. Failure to do this is probably the most frequent cause of poor seedings. The fourth and final step is to apply recommended kinds and amounts of fertilizer at the time of seeding and follow with a roller or cultipacker.

Once the pastures are established, the specialists point out that rotation grazing will provide about 12 percent more feed than continuous grazing.

FARM PRICES

The loan rate on the 1950 wheat crop probably will be about 3 to 5 cents lower than the rate for the 1949 crop, according to a recent estimate of the United States Department of Agriculture.

PUBLICATIONS

Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station, Baton Rouge:

Louisiana Pastures, Extension Publication 1037, by R. A. Wasson and W. E. Monroe.

Control of Pecan Pests, Extension Publication 1038, by R. G. Strong and John A. Cox.

Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station, Stillwater:

Potassium in Oklahoma Soils: and Crop Response to Potash Fertilizer, Bulletin No. B-346, by Horace J. Harper.

Copies of these bulletins may be secured by request to the publisher.