

Ag and Food NEWSLETTER

Fertilizer Label Change

ELEMENTAL DESIGNATION OF NUTRIENT materials in fertilizers got another boost at the recent meeting of the American Society of Agronomy. Agronomists' position is considered important, for they are responsible for making recommendations to growers. If switch to elemental designation should go through, lower analyses will appear on the fertilizer labels for P and K, requiring considerable educational effort to convince growers that they are still getting the same fertilizers as before. Fertilizer control officials discussed change in label guarantees last year and formed a joint committee with agronomists and fertilizer industry to consider question. State officials probably are in favor of change, but it will be several years before labels change. In addition to farmer education there will have to be a coordinated change of state laws requiring P and K be substituted for P_2O_5 and K_2O .

Spruce Budworm

APPEARS THAT 1955 will be a year of much insect damage to western forests unless strong measures to control are taken through spraying and logging. Western foresters sum up the picture in terms of millions of acres to be sprayed—costing millions of dollars. Spruce budworm spraying will cost more than \$4 million if 600,000 acres each, in eastern Oregon and northern New Mexico, a larger acreage in southern Idaho, and 2 million acres in Montana get the treatment they should. About \$1 million will be needed to stop outbreak of spruce bark beetles in southern Colorado (through spraying of bole of tree).

And Other Forest Pests

MONTANA AND IDAHO ARE EXPERIENCING three major infestations, including spruce bark beetle and Douglas fir bark beetle in addition to the spruce budworm. In that area, bark beetles are normally controlled through logging of infested trees and by spraying "trap trees" (trees which have been felled for this purpose). DDT-oil solutions are normally used in aerial control projects. Ethylenedibromide is applied to standing or felled trap trees to kill bark beetles. Tree killing insects have been killing upward of 5 billion board feet in western forests each year.

Wheat Short

DURHAM WHEAT FOR SPAGHETTI AND MACARONI is in short supply, due chiefly to inroads of stem rust. Good milling wheat is also short. Stem rust is a factor here, too, but many place most of the blame on rigid price supports. CCC quality standards are physically based, while milling quality is largely a chemical property; farmers, therefore, got the same support price for a good or a bad milling wheat if the two were the same physically. The same situation resulted in commingling in storage of good and bad milling wheats of the same physical grade. CCC is thus largely unable to take advantage of the 115% of parity that good milling wheat is currently bringing.

Cotton Insecticides

TWO ORGANIC PHOSPHATE COMPOUNDS have been rated "very promising" for control of several cotton insects according to reports from the recent meeting of the Entomological Society of America. Benzyl triazine derivative of the ethyl ester of dithiophosphoric acid gives good experimental control of boll weevil, cotton aphid, spider mites, and bottom leafworm. Methyl homolog of the derivative gives good control of these insects and also kills pink bollworm. Evaluations are based on limited field tests by Texas Agricultural Experiment Station and USDA, and the compounds are not yet available for use by cotton growers.

Chemurgy Expands

MARKETING and production of agricultural products will be included in the expanded research program of the national Farm Chemurgic Council recently announced by Henry T. McKnight, council president. Council will expand its research program beyond utilization of farm products to include utilization of results of such research. As part of expansion program council's board of governors also recommended a new charter and by-laws and name change to become The Council for Agricultural and Chemurgic Research.