

### 550 Hear New Cattle Feeding Aids Explained

A crowd estimated at 550 heard some of the newest wrinkles in steel feeding explained at the Ralston Purina Co cattle feeding demonstration field day at the Lancaster Union Stock Yards Tuesday night.

On hand for the meeting were John Thompson, director of feed research, St Louis, James Maw, eastern regional livestock manager, and H Clay Weaver, Lancaster County district salesman.

Thompson said that Purina research has shown that silage, grass or corn, is the best and cheapest way to put gains on young steers. He recommended silage with only a small amount of carbohydrate supplement up to 60 to 90 days before marketing.

At that time, he said, the steers should go on full feed to be properly finished.

He also answered questions on the use of hormones and mineral feed supplements.

Highlight of the evening was the showing of results of two pens of steers which have been on feed at the Yards for the past 120 days. A complete cost breakdown on the two feeding programs used was presented.

### Dutch Elm Spread Can Be Stopped, Dr. Guyton Says

HARRISBURG — Spread of the serious Dutch elm disease in Pennsylvania can be curtailed provided owners of elm trees take proper precautionary measures, the State Department of Agriculture warned today following receipt of inquiries on control.

Dutch elm disease, first found in Pennsylvania in the early 1930's, was believed brought to this county from Holland on a shipment of logs. It is now found in all 67 counties in the State where elms are grown.

The disease is spread by the European and native bark beetles that fly from diseased to vigorous trees from mid-May to October. The beetles are usually attracted to elms weakened by the elm leaf beetle.

Dr. Thomas L. Guyton, director of the Bureau of Plant Industry in the Department of Agriculture, said the pest already has ruined the bulk of elms in some communities and on college campuses and estates.

All diseased trees should be destroyed by cutting and burning, Dr. Guyton said. He added that this should be done before the activity of the beetle begins in May. If these steps are not taken, beetles will spread the infection to other, nearby healthy elms within a short period.

Diseased elms can be detected by their wilted leaves. First signs of the disease as a rule are found in the top branches. Dr. Guyton recommended heavy dosages of DDT to be applied to all healthy elms in the Spring. He added that elm trees should be fertilized to stimulate good, healthy growth.

The State Department expert said persons in doubt of this disease should contact him at Harrisburg or their county agricultural agent.

Once infectious bronchitis is introduced in poultry, probably by carrier birds, man is likely to be the most important factor in spreading the disease from one flock to another, veterinary authorities report.

### Farmers Asked To Look Out For Witchweed

Small reddish flowers on low-growing weeds may be danger signals to farmers, particularly in the Southeast, the U S Department of Agriculture warned today. Witchweed, a parasitic plant that attacks corn and some other crops, has been found on about 38,000 acres near the coast in both North Carolina and South Carolina.

Farmers in these and other States are asked to be on the lookout for an unfamiliar weed with bright green, slightly hairy leaves, and the bright, generally reddish flowers. First discovered in this county in the fall of 1956, some witchweed plants were found first breaking the ground surface in latter May of this year in the Carolinas. Wilting of volunteer corn plants was evident a few days later. Witchweed roots penetrate roots of host plants, robbing them of food and water.

Symptoms of parasitism resemble those produced by acute drought—stunting, wilting, and yellowing. The first witchweed blooms—small and usually brick red or scarlet, sometimes yellowish red, yellowish or almost white—appeared in early June, and will continue until frost. Blooms are numerous.

USDA's Agricultural Research Service and State pest control agencies are surveying intensively in areas adjacent to the area found infested by the weed in 1956. Thus far, it has shown up on 354 farms in eight counties in North Carolina, and on 116 farms in five South Carolina counties.

Surveys have been made also in parts of Alabama, Florida and Georgia, but without turning up any evidence of witchweed in these areas. Farmers themselves, however, should search their land intensively for their own protection because destruction of plants now can save crop damage later and prevent spread to new areas. Corn failed completely in some infested fields in the Carolinas in 1956 and again this year.

By the end of June this year, damage to corn was severe in all infested areas. Parasitized corn plants wilt and growth ceases at about five feet in some areas in which normal corn plants grow eight to 10 feet tall.

Anyone finding witchweed or suspecting its presence is asked to notify his county agent. The agent can arrange for positive identification and can suggest measures for eradication. Witchweed plants or seed should not be moved from the field, since the minute seeds are easily spread.

Corn, sugarcane, sorghum, many grasses, certain sedges, and some broadleaved plants are attacked by witchweed. By the time the corn is ready to "lay by," crabgrass will be coming along—and witchweed attacks crabgrass. The weed usually does not show up in cotton and tobacco fields early, but may appear there, if present, when crabgrass comes in. Witchweed was observed last year parasitizing crabgrass in fields of tobacco, peanuts, beans, peas, and sweet potatoes.

One witchweed plant can produce up to half a million tiny seeds. Pest control agencies are eager to find every patch of the pest they can this summer, to plan an action program and to prevent further spread.

A Federal quarantine to regulate movement of articles that might spread witchweed from infested parts of the Carolinas will probably be imposed by mid-August. North Carolina and South Carolina are expected to impose parallel State quarantines to cover intrastate movement of regulated products.

U. S. agriculturists are indebted to scientists in foreign lands for most of their present knowledge about witchweed. Research is now under way to learn whether the plant behaves the same in the United States as in its previously known habitats.

Singles copies of Watch Out for Witchweed, a leaflet illustrating the plant in color and suggesting control methods, may be obtained free from the Office of Information, U S Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D C. Ask for PA-331.



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