

Winter Wheat Acreage Reserve Only 36 Pct. of 1957; State Acreage Up

Slightly over 38 million acres of Winter Wheat "allotment" land were put in the 1958 Acreage Reserve of the Soil Bank through the close of the winter wheat signup period Oct. 4, the U. S. Department of Agriculture announced.

According to preliminary reports from State Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation committees in the 36 States of the commercial wheat area, 140,662 Acreage Reserve agreements, covering 3,806,000 acres, had been signed by farmers through the Oct. 4 deadline. Participating farmers will be eligible for payments totaling \$76,808,773 if they comply with their agreements.

At the end of the 1957 winter wheat Acreage Reserve signup

last year, 10,692,000 acres had been offered through the signing of 193,474 agreements. The maximum payments on this acreage totaled \$198,877,000, although there were some later cancellations.

The number of 1957 winter wheat acreage reserve agreements reported is nearly 73 per cent of the number signed last year, but the acreage covered is only 35.6 per cent of a year ago. The maximum payments committed for the 1958 program are 38.6 per cent of the comparable 1957 figure.

For the 1957 signup reported, the average acreage per contract is 27.1 acres compared with 76 acres a year ago. The average amount of payment per contract is \$546.05 this year compared with \$1,413.86 last year.

The Keystone State has placed 47,364 acres in the reserve with 5,092 agreements being signed. The maximum payment these farmers can expect to receive will total \$1,341,634.

This compares with only 37,381 acres entered into the reserve last year.

New England Trees Must Be Inspected

USDA officials again remind Christmas tree dealers and the general public that Christmas trees and evergreen boughs grown in northeastern areas infested with the gypsy moth, must be inspected and certified before shipping them southward and westward.

Attractants to Lure Insect Pests Modern Weapons of Entomologists

Natural and synthetic attractants, which radiate luring "scent waves" to lead insects to their doom, are sought by USDA scientists as modern weapons to combat these pests.

Three attractants proved effective last year in the Mediterranean fruit fly eradication campaign operating in Florida under Federal-State direction. And male gypsy moths on nearly 3 million acres of forest land in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania have been tripped by another attractant in the Federal-State eradication effort in those states.

With the Medfly, a natural and a synthetic attractant have been used to lure flies into traps to detect their presence and abundance in an area. In addition a food-like attractant mixed with insecticides lures flies to consume the lethal bait.

The synthetic lure and protein hydrolysate bait that spearheaded the Medfly eradication attack were discovered, developed, and tested by ARS chemists and entomologists at the Agricultural Research Center, Beltsville, Md.

The attractant used against gypsy moth is prepared from female gypsy moths. It lures male moths to baited traps from distances of at least a half mile. Catching the males is a means of checking the degree of kill from spraying the foliage-eating larvae this season. Combined with manual scouting, it is also a means of locating egg masses that will produce larvae next season. The need for spraying next year can be determined by the number of egg masses found in a given area this year.

Success of the attractants used has encouraged the search for new natural and synthetic compounds that will be effective not only for Medflies and gypsy moths but also for many other destructive insects.

Beltsville chemists are screening hundred of natural plant materials and many organic synthetics. Workers have already turned up several new attractants. Common weeds, obnoxious plants, vegetables and flowers are among the plants being investigated.

Each plant material is put through two separate extractions. One process, using ethyl ether as a solvent, removes the coloring matter, fats, and waxes. The other process, using alcohol, removes the sugars, albumins, alkaloids, and saponine.

Work with organic synthetics embraces an entirely different field of effort. As in the case of natural materials, initial work with synthetics is usually done without prior knowledge that they will be attractive. But development of one attractant from a given organic synthetic frequently leads to development of other and sometimes more effective compounds from a related ma-

terial.

An example is the initial discovery in Hawaii that the propyl ester of 6-methyl-3-1-carboxylic acid prepared at Beltsville attracts male Medflies. Next, the isopropyl ester of the same organic synthetic was prepared at Beltsville and proved superior in field tests in Hawaii. This compound was then made in commercial quantities for use in the Medfly eradication effort until the more recent synthesis of a third and more attractive compound — the sec-butyl ester from the same source.

This new compound has replaced the first two synthetics. Furthermore, it is now being used to replace angelica-seed oil, a natural attractant now practically unobtainable, as a lure to bait more than 50,000 traps distributed throughout Florida.

In working with any organic synthetics, every possible chemical variation of an attractant material is tried and tested before it is tossed out. Thus in some cases, 100 or more related compounds may be made in the effort to make certain that no possibility is overlooked.

Most of the tests are made at USDA entomologist research stations, where there is opportunity to field-test the various attractants on several insect varieties. An example is the Fruit Fly Research Laboratory in Honolulu, Hawaii, where the Mediterranean fruit fly, oriental fruit fly, and melon fly are common. These and other insects are destined to run up against even more effective scents in future invasions.

Masonic Homes Farms Has Approved Dam

An Ayrshire cow, Masonic Homes Architect's Tina, owned by Masonic Homes Farms of Elizabethtown has been given the high rating of Approved, according to the Ayrshire Breeders' Assn acting executive secretary, Doris E Chadburn of Brandon, Vt.

The Ayrshire Approved rating has been given to this cow in recognition of the producing ability of herself and at least two of her offspring.

Economist New Assistant To Benson

Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson has named Martin Sorkin, 46, of Hyattsville, Md., as assistant to the Secretary. Sorkin's special field is in agricultural economics. He succeeds Dr. Don Paalberg who recently became Assistant Secretary for Marketing and Foreign Agriculture.

Sorkin entered government service in 1934 as a junior agricultural economist. In 1936 he transferred to the Illinois State Agricultural Adjustment Administration where he was in charge of statistical operations. He returned to Washington in 1942 as head of the statistical service for the North Central region.

From 1947 to 1950 he was chief of the oilseeds division of the Fats & Oils branch, Production and Marketing Administration, during which period he received the Department's Superior Service Award. In 1950 he was placed in charge of the statistical and allocations division, Requirements and Allocations branch. In 1954 he became economic advisor to the Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Agricultural Stabilization, specializing in price support work.

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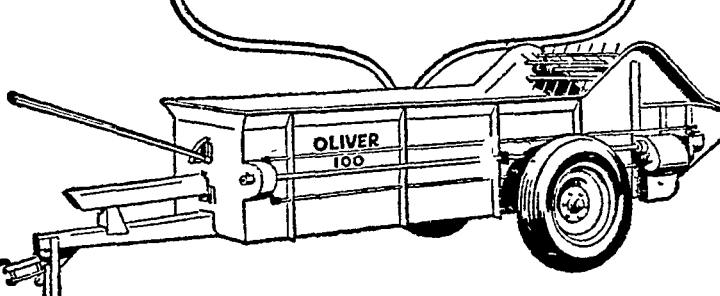


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