

New Nematode-Resistant Lima Bean Being Made Available This Year

A new green-seeded lima bean variety, highly productive in root-knot, nematode-infested soils, has been released by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Oklahoma and Virginia Agricultural Experiment Stations for commercial production in 1958.

Known as "Nemagreen," the new variety is adapted to soils infested with the root-knot nematode, which severely reduces yields of non resistant commercial varieties.

Seed of Nemagreen for 1958 plantings will be available through numerous seed companies. Stocks are adequate to meet demands of commercial growers in nematode-infested areas. The seed will not be distributed or sold by USDA or the State experiment stations.

Cooperative efforts to develop root-knot-resistant lima beans began 15 years ago. Resistant strains were collected from widely scattered areas by plant breeders R. E. Wester, USDA, H. B. Corder of the Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station, and P. H. Massey, Jr., of the Virginia Station. One of the important basic plant materials from which the Nemagreen variety was developed is a nematode-resistant lima bean, grown by the Hopi Indians for its ability to produce well in infested soils in Arizona. Dr. Corder obtained specimens of this variety from the late W. W. Mackie of the California Agricultural Experiment Station, and crossed them with several non-resistant limas that possessed other desirable horticultural characteristics. Oklahoma 27 grew out of this work.

The new variety, Nemagreen, is a cross of Early Thorogreen and

the white-seeded Oklahoma 27 variety. The latter obtained its nematode-resistant character from its Hopi lima bean parent. USDA plant breeders made this cross.

In field tests made from coast-to-coast during the past five years, Nemagreen averaged somewhat lighter yields than non-resistant varieties on root-knot free soil. But it has far surpassed the performance of green-seeded non-resistant limas on infested soils.

On non-infested soils Nemagreen produced, in 125 trials, an average of 4,420 pounds of marketable pods per acre, compared with 4,608 pounds for Early Thorogreen and 4,761 pounds for Clark's Bush.

On nematode-infested soils, however, yields of as much as 2,400 pounds of shelled beans per acre have been reported for the resistant Nemagreen variety, compared with only 800 pounds of common susceptible varieties.

Farmers Spend More For Electric Power

The average monthly electric bill of farmers in July 1957 reached a new high of \$10.50, according to figures released April 3 by the Crop Reporting Board.

This is one per cent higher than in 1956 and, compared with the 1947-49 average, the 1957 bill represents an increase of 71 per cent.

The current report further points out that a combination of factors reduced the 1957 cost per kilowatt hour 02 cents below 1956 and 19 per cent below the 1947-49 average.

Rural Life Sunday Participation Urged By Benson; To Be May 11

Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson today called attention to Rural Life Sunday and Soil Stewardship Week and urged widespread participation in these observances.

Rural Life Sunday — the fifth Sunday after Easter — will be marked on May 11 this year. It is a traditional observance of the church to emphasize the spiritual values of rural life. Soil Stewardship Week, to be marked May 11 to 18, was first designated by President Eisenhower in 1955 to "help our citizens learn more about the true relation of the land and water to their material and spiritual welfare."

BOTH THESE observances are sponsored by a number of religious, agricultural and other organizations, including the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, and the National Lutheran Council. The principal agricultural sponsor of Soil Stewardship Week is the National Association of Soil Conservation Districts.

Rural Life Sunday and Soil Stewardship Week are observed in thousands of local communities. Churches very often take the lead in special observances, with local farm organizations, 4-H Clubs, soil conservation districts, and other groups participating.

IN HIS STATEMENT today Secretary Benson said "The rural community has traditionally been considered a repository of values and attitudes which make for a desirable society. We in the department sincerely welcome the help such observances give in interpreting and enriching rural



EZRA TAFT BENSON

life. "Rural life is changing. Instead of a single, homogeneous structure almost completely employed in agriculture, it has become a complex heterogeneous structure with great diversity of occupation. In this setting we must not lose sight of inherent values in the country community.

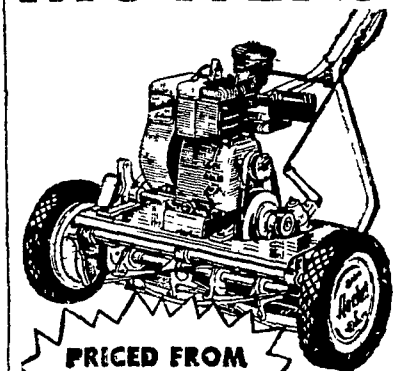
"Setting aside a specific time helps bring an awareness to both rural and urban people of (1) the stewardship implications in the use of land and the conservation of national resources; (2) the development of opportunities for people — particularly our young people — in agriculture and in rural areas so they can work toward the goals to which they aspire; and (3) gives recognition to the place of the rural family in our total society."

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