

Bacteria Destroy Herbicide Residue in the Soil

Chemical weed killers used on farm and garden crops and lawns do not last long in the soil after their work is done. They are destroyed fairly rapidly by soil bacteria with no damage to soil organisms, according to James J. Reid, Professor of Bacteriology at the Pennsylvania State University.

"Where the soil is fertile, bacteria have no trouble destroying left-over organic herbicides," declared Dr. Reid during the Northeastern Weed Control Conference, January 6 in New York City.

"Frequent use of weed killers on good soil tends to build up bacteria which destroy the weed killers when they reach the soil," the Penn State researcher stated. "With 2, 4-D & 2, 4, 5-T the destruction is rapid. Herbicides such as substituted

ureas and dinitro compound take longer to break down". Latest experiments show that build-up of nitrifying bacteria occurs long before the herbicide is gone. With a second herbicide treatment, the recovery of the nitrifying bacteria is rapid, he observes. Certain soil organisms on poor ground will be temporarily weakened by some herbicides. Break-down of the chemicals is slowed up by excessive wet or dry weather — or poor physical condition of the soil.

Tests of organic herbicides began at Penn State about seven years ago: Scientists and farm leaders wanted to know whether the new organic herbicides would destroy valuable bacteria in the soil. Dr. Reid and associates lead the nation in research of this type.

Twelve States Covered By Soil Conservation

Addition of Tennessee as the twentieth State completely covered by farmer-organized and farmer-managed soil conservation districts was hailed today by U.S. Department of Agriculture officials as another milestone in the nationwide soil and water conservation.

Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands also have all their land within soil conservation districts.

Another 12 States are more than 90 percent covered by soil conservation districts. Nine are between 80 and 90 percent and five are between 70 and 80 percent covered. Two States have approximately 65 percent of their land within soil conservation district boundaries and the remaining two States are less than 30 percent covered by districts.

Altogether, 2,865 soil conservation districts now include within legal boundaries approximately 90 percent of the land in farms and 95 percent of all the farms and ranches in the United States. Nearly two million farmers are listed as cooperators by these districts.

States 100 percent covered by soil conservation districts are Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, and Wisconsin, plus Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

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Farm Calendar

(From page 1)
sponsored by the Lancaster County Swine Producers Assn. at the Lancaster Union Stock Yards. Sale begins at 2.30 p.m.
10:00 a.m. — Dairy Herd Improvement Assn. workshop on how to use records to best advantage. Farm Bureau, Dillerville Rd., Lancaster.

March 2 — 6:30 p.m. — Annual meeting and banquet of Soil Conservation District at the Blue Ball fire hall. Tickets available from any director or teacher of Vocational Agriculture.

March 3 — 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Lancaster County Dairy Day at the Guernsey pavilion, Lincoln Highway east of Lancaster. Exhibits of dairy equipment will be on display and discussions will be held on many problems of dairymen.

BEST MUMS NAMED

Three All-American chrysanthemum selections have been announced, reports Mrs. Lynn Smith, Penn State extension floriculturist. They are Headliner, glowing terracotta buds which open a walnut-coral; Madi Gras, bicolor of red and gold with quilled petals; and Pin Cherub, light purplish-pink with dark centers.

igan, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, and Pennsylvania.

Try a Classified.

Winter is a good time to install new or sharpen old knives in the forage harvester.

A serving of pork provides about three times as much iron as a similar size serving of beef liver.

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