

Peach Fertilizer Program Boosts Yields By 1/4

Peach trees can yield one-fourth more fruit than usual with a fertilizer program of high rates of nitrogen and medium to high rates of super phosphate and potash. This has been shown in 8 years of experiments by the Agricultural Experiment Station at the Pennsylvania State University.

Tests at University Park with high rates of super phosphate and medium rates of potash have produced as high as 900 bushels of

peaches per acre, reports C. Marshall Ritter, research pomologist at Penn State. Average yields of 550 to 600 bushels per acre have been common in these trials he reports.

The addition of 75 to 100 pounds of 20 per cent super-phosphate per tree annually—together with the nitrogen and potash rates used—has yielded approximately 100 bushels more fruit per acre than with a so-called "normal" peach tree fertilizer program.

Dr. Ritter says taste panels have found peaches grown under the above fertilizer levels to be excellent in flavor.

From his studies he be-

lieves most fertilizer used in orchards helps the cover crop more than the tree. While fruit tree roots are 6 inches or deeper in the soil, most phosphate fertilizer applications penetrate only the top 3 inches of soil.

Due to the slow use of fertilizer by fruit trees Dr. Ritter finds that nitrogen may take 2 to 3 years to be reflected in a fruit crop. Potash may take 3 to 5 years for its full effect. Phosphate works very slowly, he adds. He comes up with the observation that the "growers son may profit from today's efforts to correct phosphate shortages."

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Caterpillars To Be Fewer Experts Say

Harrisburg — Dr. Thomas L. Guyton, director of the Bureau of Plant Industry of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, predicted Monday that Eastern tent caterpillar infestation will not be as great this year as last.

He based his prediction on surveys made late last week which disclosed only three egg clusters in six of the most heavily infested counties last year.


"The caterpillars are held in check by a long list of na-

tural enemies. These enemies account for the years which the insect is rare noticed.

One thorough spraying of an infested plant with a D.T. mixture (four tablespoons of 50 per cent wettable D.T. powder to a gallon of water) is enough to protect it throughout the season. Spraying should be done as soon as the first small "tents" are noticed. Malathion 25 per cent wettable powder at the rate of two tablespoons to a gallon of water may also be used as a spray control.

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