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Oak Wilt Control Program In Pa. Slows Spread

Pennsylvania's program of oak wilt control may account, in part, for the slow rate of spread of oak wilt compared with adjacent states not using such control measures, stated William Merrill, Jr., research plant pathologist at Penn State University, during a Northeast Forest Pathology Workshop held recently in Morgantown, W.Va.

Merrill referred to the oak wilt control program carried out by the Bureau of Plant Industry, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, whereby aerial observation detects diseased and dead oaks. Such trees are cut down by the Bureau and ammonium sulfamate (Ammate) is applied to the stumps.

Such a program reduces considerably the amount of oak wilt fungus that can be spread by wood-boring beetles and other insects, Merrill pointed out.

He and his associates have found that the fungus causing

oak wilt can survive up to five years in the roots of dead trees. However the fungus will seldom live more than one year when stumps of trees are treated with Ammate.

He and research assistant John M. Skelly, in the department of plant pathology at Penn State, have excavated and studied root systems of over 300 trees killed by oak wilt. These roots became infested with insects soon after the trees died. Wood-boring beetles and similar insects carried the fungus in or on their bodies when they emerged from the roots.

Studies by the Agricultural Experiment Station at Penn State have confirmed previous findings that such insects feed on healthy oaks by tunneling into the woody portion of trees. Such wounds make ideal infection areas for spread of the oak wilt fungus, Merrill claimed.

Ag. Sec. Urges Food Industry To Push Eggs

Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman asked the nation's food industry to join with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Poultry and Egg National Board in a cooperative merchandising campaign to encourage consumption of unusually heavy supplies of eggs.

In a letter to major retailers, food trade associations and public feeders, Freeman said that supplies of eggs now and during the coming months "will make it possible to offer consumers this highly nutritious and outstanding protein food at bargain prices."

Egg output now is running some seven percent above a year ago. Supplies will continue to be larger than normal at least through July.

The Secretary lauded the egg

industry for "aggressively promoting its product" through the Poultry and Egg National Board. USDA is cooperating with a plentiful foods special campaign, spearheaded by the Consumer and Marketing Service whose food trades representatives and marketing specialists across the country are enlisting support of food marketing and allied industry groups, and communications media.

"The ability of the food industry to employ effective, imaginative merchandising to move abundances of farm products through commercial trade channels has been demonstrated frequently. Your help, now, for eggs, will be appreciated by and beneficial to producers and consumers alike," Freeman said.

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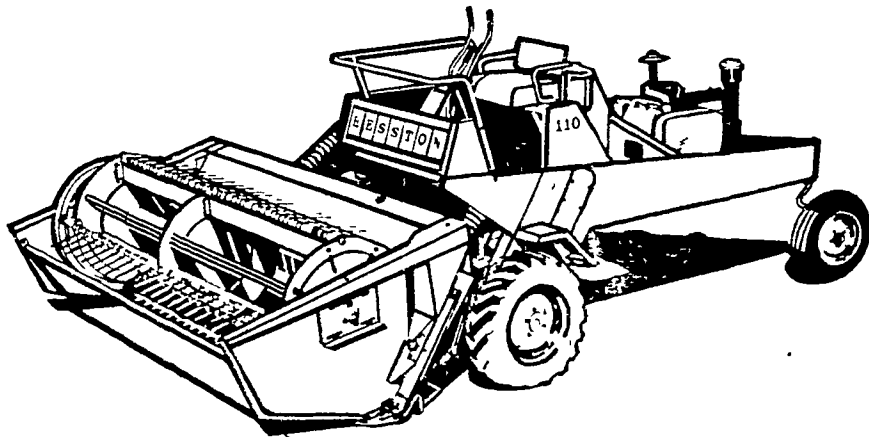
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