

Official Foresees Basic Changes in Pesticides

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fruit fly into Southern California

Attractants — Scientists are continuing to discover what makes insects respond such as chemical substance in plants the pests eat, chemical sex attractants, light, sound, etc. Research on sex attractants has been particularly encouraging.

Attractants have already been demonstrated for such pests as the Japanese beetle, corn earworm, boll weevil, and gypsy moth

Parasites and Predators — The theory of introducing non-harmful species to attack tar-

get pests is not new — nor has it been very successful

Over a period of years agricultural authorities have attempted to introduce parasites and predators of about 80 pests into the United States. Of 520 species imported, 115 have become established, but only about 20 have provided significant control of the most destructive pests.

Possible Innovations
Beyond these methods, Straube foresees a number of other possible innovations in the next generation of pesticides.

"Future pesticides in granular form could operate like a

delayed-action cold tablet. After granulars are put out in the field, a fertilizer element might be released initially to help the plant grow. Then the herbicide element would take over to prevent weeds. Finally, an insecticide would be released to protect the plant's leaves," he said.

Termed controlled-release pesticides, the development would mean a farmer could apply the product at the same time he sows the seed. Theoretically, he would not have to set foot in the field again until harvest.

Such pesticides could also change methods of planting. Crops such as corn or soybeans are planted in rows to permit cultivation, fertilization and harvest.

But with the need to fertilize and cultivate eliminated, the seeds could be broadcast planted. New harvesting equipment, of course, would have to be developed, but the yield per acre

would be significantly higher without wasted row space

Whatever form taken by the next generation of pesticides, Straube says progress should be dramatic. He summarizes the industry's contributions this way:

"Yesterday, our concern was keeping the worm out of the apple, and that was about all we could do. Today's farm chemicals not only kill the worm, they improve the fruit's finish and increase the yield per tree. Tomorrow's may well enlarge the apple's size and remove the seeds"

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For Sale—Big Dutchman feeder, phone 215/267-2319.

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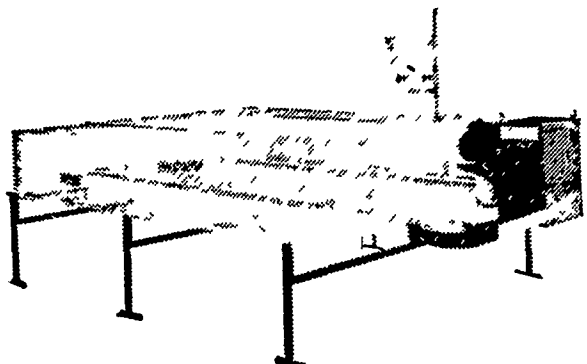
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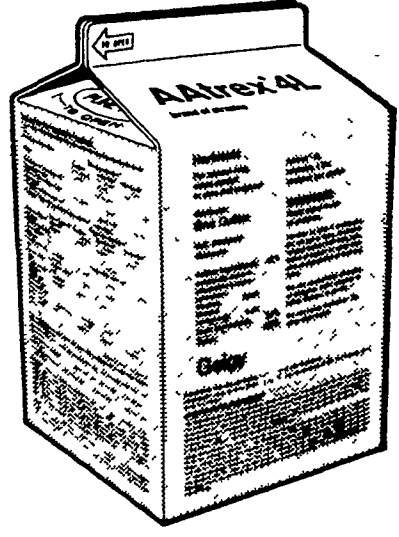
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