

# Co. Farm Inputs Spending Is \$118 Million in '69

Lancaster County farmers spent some \$118 million during the last census year, 1969, for the purchase of livestock, feed, seed, fertilizer and chemicals, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Of the county's 5,323 farms included in the census, 3,075 or 57 per cent, were reported to have had production expenses in excess of \$10,000 for the year.

The bulk of the farmers' expense was for livestock and poultry and for the feed to keep these animals.

A total of \$37,596,810 was spent in the county for livestock animals and poultry.

The feed bill for these birds and animals came to nearly the same amount, \$36,428,277.

A breakdown of the feed bill shows that \$29,538,252 was used to purchase commercially mixed formula feeds.

Salaries paid for hired farm labor in the county amounted to \$6,089,210 of the total figure, while only \$2,291,448 went to pay custom operators and contract type labor.

Commercial fertilizers took a chunk of the total amounting to \$4,403,962, while the lime industry got \$363,958.

Agricultural chemicals including pesticides and herbicides cost the county farmers \$777,768 and all forms of petroleum products to operate their farms cost them \$2,885,280.

The cost of seeds and plants cost county farmers \$1,764,458 in 1969.

The total expenses for farm business needs that year ran roughly a third higher than were reported by the government in

1964. Not included in the report was the cost of farm equipment, sales for which support a whole industry. Lancaster County farmers during the census year had

equipment valued at nearly \$47 million.

Included were 10,738 tractors. Based on the 4,328 farms reporting in this category, county farms average 2.4 tractors each.

A total of 490 self-propelled combines were reported to be owned by county farmers while both corn pickers and balers figured out to number slightly more than one to a farmer.

## Penn State Scientists Report Success Using Bacteria Spray on Gypsy Moth

Scientists at Pennsylvania State University are using a bacterial preparation to control gypsy moth infestations of oaks and other trees, it was reported November 29 at the annual meeting of the Entomological Society of America in Los Angeles.

The ingredient is a microbial insecticide known as *Bacillus thuringiensis*, announced Dr.

William G. Yendol, Penn State associate professor of entomology.

Using sprays of this bacteria, Dr Yendol and associates have reduced substantially the number of gypsy moth larvae compared to larvae on unsprayed trees.

Loss of leaves is no greater than 25 per cent in sprayed areas, compared with 50 to 95 per cent defoliation in untreated areas, he said.

The bacterium produces disease in the gypsy moth larvae but is harmless to man, wildlife, and beneficial insects, Dr Yendol reported. He said the bacterial spray is produced by three commercial companies and has been registered for use on more than 20 agricultural crops.

To become infected, larvae of the gypsy moth must eat bacterial spores. After eating these, larvae usually cease to feed and die within three or four days.

Thus, complete coverage of foliage is vital in using this bacterium, he pointed out. He indicated the spray is not effective as a contact insecticide.

Timing of the application is important, Dr Yendol explained from his preliminary findings. Spraying should be correlated with foliage development, usually when leaves have expanded 30 to 40 per cent. Such timing will place the bacterium on foliage when the first and second larval stages, the young forms existing between molts, begin to appear.

White and red oaks were the dominant tree species in 12 one-quarter acre experimental plots used in the spring and summer of 1971. The material was applied with a truck mounted mist blower. The spray was used at

two rates, 16 billion and 8 billion international units per acre in 20 gallons of finished spray. The two doses produced no significant differences in larval control.

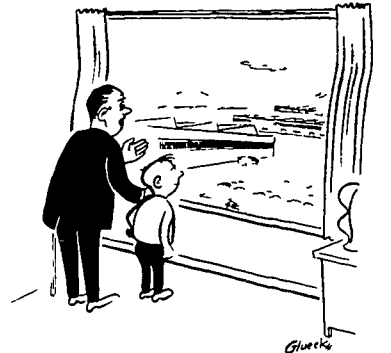
The spray remained effective four weeks after the last application. Persistence of the bacterium is important, Dr. Yendol affirmed, since the larvae may hatch over a three to four week period.

The first treatment was made May 27 and two additional applications were made at 10 day intervals. The experiments were carried out at four different plots.

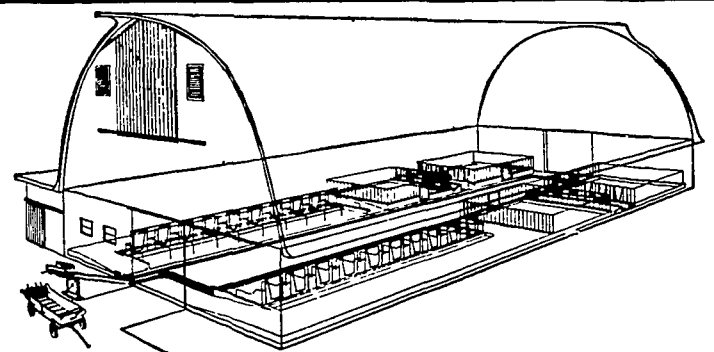
Dr Yendol cautioned that further field testing is needed with *Bacillus thuringiensis* microbial insecticide, placing emphasis on the timing and methods of application.

He observed that defoliation of oaks was greater than for other trees because of larval preference for oaks.

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