

USDA Expands Pest Research Program

U. S. Secretary of Agriculture Earl L. Butz has announced a broad new pest management action program and an expanded research program to help farmers control pests more economically and effectively.

At the same time it will reduce the amount of DDT and other chemical pesticides currently being used.

The new program provides for a combination of chemical, biological and cultural pest control techniques, as well as long-range pest control research. This should enable farmers to reduce pesticide use in 1972 and later years.

The program will be conducted

jointly by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, the National Science Foundation, and the Environmental Protection Agency, in cooperation with State Departments of Agriculture and State Agricultural Experiment Stations and Extension Services.

"We are well aware of the need to continually examine our methods of pest control and make modifications when possible. This program will help farmers develop integrated control techniques for protecting crops and livestock from insects and diseases while reducing farmer's production costs and protecting the Nation's consumers from increased costs for food and

clothing," Secretary Butz said.

"The program will have other benefits. It will help protect the environment from the effects of currently used pesticides as well as protecting farmers, farm workers and their families, and the public from the possibly harmful effects of more toxic materials that might be used as substitutes for DDT or other chemicals."

The initial pest management program effort will be directed toward cotton because of the amount of chemical pesticides currently required to control cotton pests, the mounting ineffectiveness of some of these insecticidal chemicals and their

side effects on beneficial insects and the environment. Later the program will be broadened to include insect pests affecting other agricultural crops.

The accelerated pest management program generally calls for assessment of pest population levels by organized scouting programs, selective use of pesticides, placing greater reliance on beneficial insects, utilizing special cultural practices, and in the case of the cotton boll weevil, applying insecticides late in the growing season to control the population of the diapausing weevil—a period in the fall when the

weevils' development is interrupted.

Cotton is grown on about 11 million acres in 19 states, and is subject to attack by more than 130 species of insects or spider mites. The boll weevil alone infests over 8 million acres in the cotton belt, with annual losses exceeding \$200 million. Currently, cotton producers must make 10 to 20 pesticide applications annually at a cost of \$15 to \$35 per acre to control these pests.

Under the new program, on-farm pest management efforts which have previously been field-tested in a number of cotton producing areas will be expanded. A total of \$2,250,000 in existing funds has been allocated by the USDA to this phase of the program in 1972.

It is expected that each of the pest management activities will be financially self-supporting at the farm level three years after initiation of the program. This would allow reallocation of the funds to pest management programs for other crops.

In addition to the on-farm phase of the program, a total of \$3.5 million will be allocated in 1972 to expand the research needed to field test new pest control and detection techniques, and to develop the tools necessary for initiating still other methods of control. Of these funds, \$1.7 million will be provided by USDA, \$900,000 by the Environmental Protection Agency, and \$900,000 by the National Science Foundation.

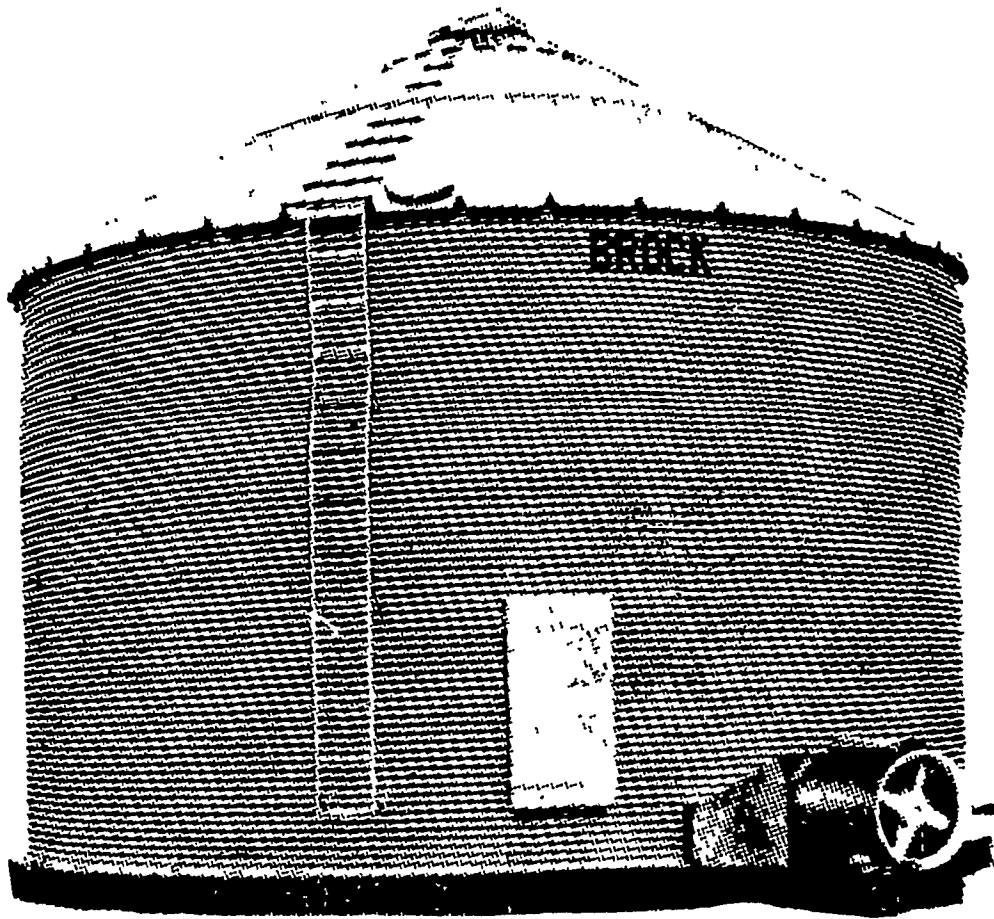
Moss Appointed

William F. (Red) Moss, former Commissioner of Agriculture for the State of Tennessee, was to become Assistant to the Secretary, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, effective February 1, 1972, U. S. Secretary of Agriculture Earl L. Butz announced recently.

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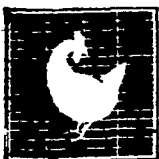
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