



With a weed-free strip 10 inches wide along each side of fence rows, Ben Sum-

mers can nuzzle his large mowers right next to the fence.

Farmstead Weed Control Gets More Emphasis

A QUICK look at Ben Summers' farmstead from a passing car makes it apparent that he places much value on keeping things neat.

The closely trimmed lawn, neatly groomed shrubs and trees and the inviting stone house all testify to the work that has gone into giving this Chester County farm its tranquil, welcoming appearance.

The eye-appeal doesn't end with the area immediately

around his house — it continues along the road in front of his farm buildings. It's so noticeable that people have asked him how he does it.

His answer: a lot of push behind the lawn mower and the use of a chemical weed killer.

"It may be extra work to keep a place neat like this, but it's worth it," he says. "It improves the value of your property — and I guess it's just more satisfying."

Summers used chemicals to

wipe out weeds where he used to mow, and found his best control of weeds along his fence rows came from spraying early when the weeds were young. Because he sprayed some areas late, he experienced some regrowth last year. "The weeds were high," he recalls, "but even the regrowth turned yellow and died, even those long-rooted milkweed."

Summers also wanted weed control in hard-to-reach places like under fences and around buildings as well as on steep banks along the road, where it's hard to use a scythe. So he bought a chemical from a local grain dealer who had used it himself and recommended it.

Overall, Summers' results were good enough to stir outside interest. "One neighbor asked me to spray for him," Ben says. "Then later the county men asked me what I used after they saw a ditch I'd sprayed along the road."

Summers did the spraying himself, holding a hand sprayer while driving the tractor. "I might have missed some spots so this year I'll use a wider nozzle to give me better coverage." His cost, other than his own labor, was \$12 for diesel oil and \$40 for Pramitol. And this gives control up to a year or more.

Another farm that has turned to chemical weed control for fence rows and farmsteads is the Hempt Farm, Cumberland County. This is a showplace for a large horse breeding operation, with 1150 acres, 90 brood mares, three stallions and 180 head of beef.

Dr. Wendell L. Cooper is the veterinarian-manager of the Max C. Hempt operation.

Controlling weeds, understandably, can be a costly item for a farm this size, with several miles of wooden and wire fence.

"In fact, in 1970, it cost \$6000 to hire six high school boys to trim weeds four or five times a year," Dr. Cooper says. And when the "weed tax" begins to run that high you look for another way. That's what Dr. Cooper did last year when he combined

chemicals with hired labor to control weeds.

With two high school boys and Pramitol, he was able to cut weed costs in half. A custom applicator did the job this year.

He found, as did Summers, that the best control comes with a March or April application, and that chemical control sure saves time and cuts costs.

Dr. Nate Hartwig, weed science professor at Penn State University, feels these chemical users are on the right track.

"We have been recommending this herbicide for industrial weed control and anywhere farmers want total weed control. It can be used to keep weeds down around barns, in the farm yard where there is gravel, and along fence rows — anyplace where you can't mow or want to eliminate the need to mow," Nate Hartwig says.

xxx

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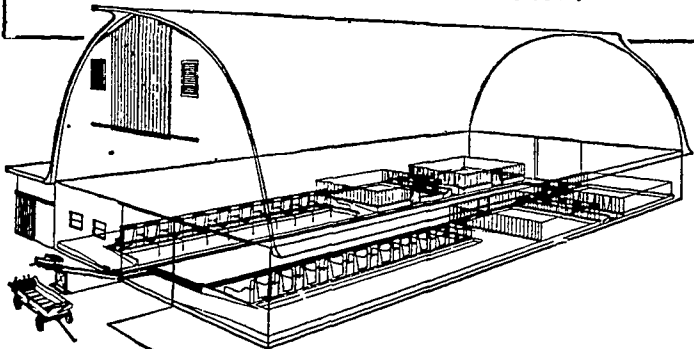
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