

17-Year Locusts Spotted in Pa.

Brood XIV of the periodical Cicada has checked into the southern tier of Pennsylvania right on schedule. Better known as 17-year locusts, a male of the species was captured

Memorial Day weekend in Cumberland County by a botanist with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

The periodical Cicada is unique among all creatures

on the earth as it has the longest reproductive cycle, exactly 17 years. Each year, with another brood having reached an advanced pupal stage, the Cicada return from deep underground, where they have wintered and summered for the past 17 years. They quickly shed their skins for the last time and emerge as adults.

These annual crops of adult Cicadae are identified as Broods, I through XVII. Only eight of the broods are big enough to be catalogued by the Bureau of Plant Industry. The largest, Brood X, will not re-appear until 1987. But this year's brood, XIV, is in a close race with Brood II, as the second-largest. The latter will be back in 1979.

The 18-county area with the heaviest infestations for 1974 includes Adams, Berks, Blair, Clearfield, Clinton, Cumberland, Franklin, Lehigh, Luzerne, Montour, Northumberland, Potter, Snyder, Schuylkill, Tioga, Union and York.

Despite the menacing specter of the huge numbers of the large insects and the deafening shriek of the male of the species, the emergence of large numbers of periodical Cicadae presents a threat only to tree

fruit growers.

The adult Cicada neither eats, bites nor stings. However, their peculiar egg-laying ritual takes its toll in the yield of mature fruit trees and may kill or permanently stunt young nursery stock. The females cut a series of slits in the twigs of trees in which they deposit their eggs. Thus weakened, the twigs will eventually wither and snap in the wind sharply curtailing the harvest of fruit. However, this activity presents no problem to other forested areas.

The eggs hatch as nymphs about six weeks later and fall to the ground to begin burrowing underground where they'll spend the next 17 years. Another distinct race of the periodical Cicada, limited primarily to the southeastern quadrant of the United States, completes its reproductive cycle in just 13 years.

While large numbers of the Cicadae worry fruit farmers and annoy everyone else, the emergence of a brood in a given area signals a time of plenty for birds and other creatures of the wild who include insects in their diet. Even pet dogs and cats look upon the Cicada as a tasty morsel.

USDA Suspends Firm's License

Brel's Foods, Inc., of Philadelphia, Penna., has been declared ineligible to operate in the produce business under the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act (PACA), the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced.

According to USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, the firm's license was suspended May 17 following failure to pay a reparation award of \$5,707 to a New Jersey wholesaler for seven lots of potatoes and onions purchased during April, 1974.

The firm answered the charges but based on the evidence submitted, USDA ordered payment of the full amount claimed. The firm may not resume operation under the PACA until the award is satisfied and approval is gained from USDA.

Also, the firm's officers, directors, and holders of more than ten percent of the stock may not be employed or affiliated with any

licensed firm without USDA approval. The officers, directors, and stockholders of Brel's Foods, Inc. are Lillian Feldman, Sandra Feldman, and Robert Feldman.

PACA established a code of good business conduct for the produce industry. It requires licenses for interstate traders in fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables and authorizes USDA to suspend or revoke a trader's license for violating the Act.

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