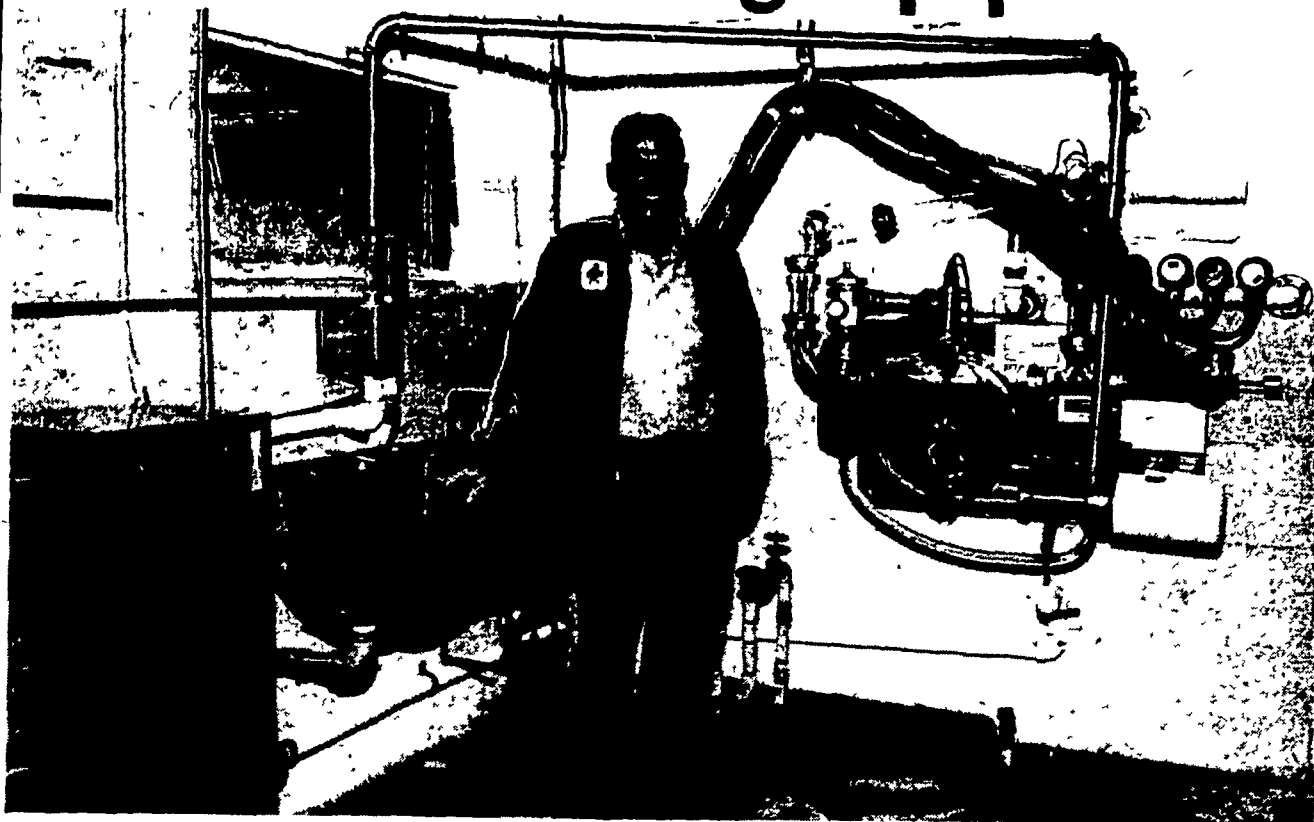


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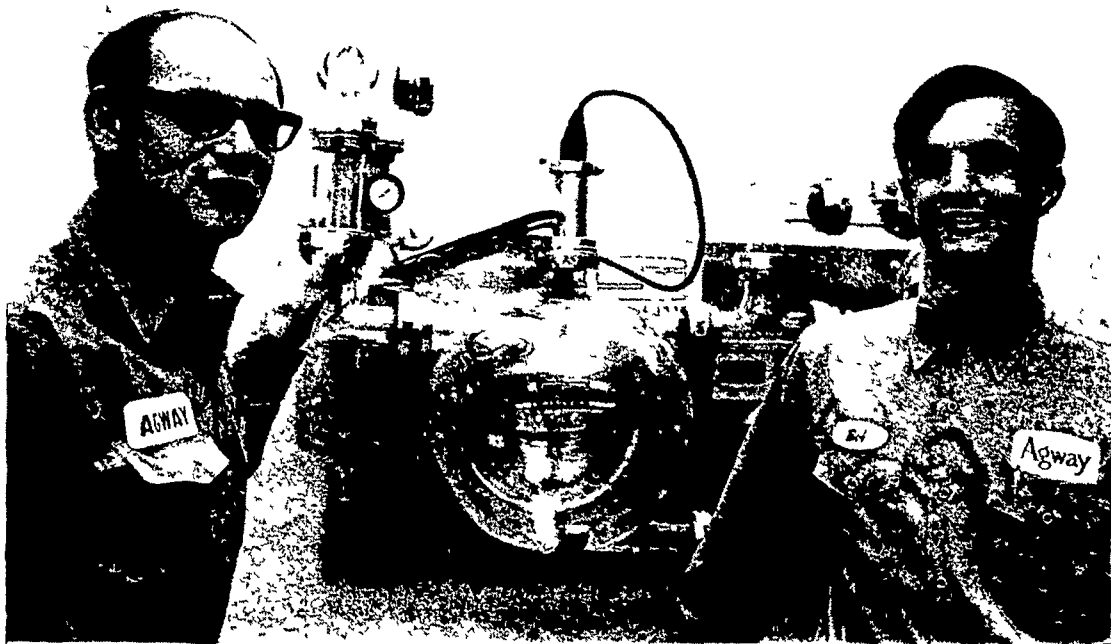


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New Alfalfa Variety Released

A new, pest-resistant variety of alfalfa named Arc has been released this fall by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and agricultural experiment stations in Maryland, North Carolina, Virginia and Pennsylvania.

Arc could increase the value of the nation's No. 1 forage crop by more than \$200 million annually, according to scientists of USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) at Beltsville and agronomists at the University of Maryland in College Park.

In several Maryland test locations, Arc, with good management practices, yielded one to two tons of hay more per acre than other varieties of alfalfa, according to Dr. Neri A. Clark, Extension forage crops specialist at the College Park campus.

Similar results have been obtained in North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

The chief Maryland test locations for the new alfalfa variety have been the university's agronomy-dairy forage research farm on Folly Quarter road in the Ellicott City-Clarksville area of central Maryland (Howard county) and at the Wye Institute on the Eastern Shore (southern Queen Annes county).

Outstanding resistance to anthracnose, a fungus disease, is the main advantage of Arc over other varieties. For this reason, Arc is well adapted to most

of the Middle Atlantic states, the Southeast, and southern portions of the Midwest. In these areas, anthracnose reduces annual yields on about four million acres of alfalfa.

Arc also possesses moderate resistance to bacterial wilt disease and to the alfalfa weevil. In addition, it is highly resistant to the pea aphid.

The vigorous growth habit and disease resistance of Arc protects the crop against encroachment from weeds. Tests show that weeds took over 50 percent of the plot areas seeded to seven commonly grown varieties, but only 15 percent of the plot areas seeded to Arc.

An additional advantage of Arc is stand persistence, owing to its combined resistance to anthracnose and bacterial wilt. These diseases eliminated stands of Williamsburg, Glacier, Cherokee and Team alfalfa in field tests. Arc yielded three additional years of good forage after the loss of the other varieties.

Seed of Arc has been released to commercial seedsmen. The Agricultural Research Service has no seed available for individuals.

Additional information on the new alfalfa variety will be available in a forthcoming issue of Agricultural Research, ARS magazine published monthly by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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