



The soil has been turned and another growing season is underway. So far it looks like its going to be a good year. By most any standard, it's been an excellent Spring in southeastern Pennsylvania and neighboring areas.

War on Johnsongrass begins

ANNAPOLIS, Md. - With spring here, the annual war against Johnsongrass begins.

It is estimated that in Maryland more than 100,000 acres, much of it prime agricultural land, are infested with the weed which spreads both by seed and underground rhizomes, robbing soil of moisture and nutrients and making it tough to deal with effectively.

A Maryland noxious weed law passed in 1970 set up the state's Johnsongrass program. An amendment passed more recently allows for compliance with the law through a Johnsongrass control agreement.

The Maryland Department of Agriculture's Plant Industries Division, Weed Control Section, coordinates with 20 counties a program designed to bring the weed

under control. MDA works through county Johnsongrass committees, cooperating with farmers and landowners to attack the problem rather than emphasizing violations and prosecutions.

Key to the program is the "Johnsongrass Control Agreement" which is worked out each year between the farmer, landowner, county authorities and MDA. This agreement states the property location, the amount of Johnsongrass infestation of the land and, most importantly, the methods of control that will be used to combat the weed.

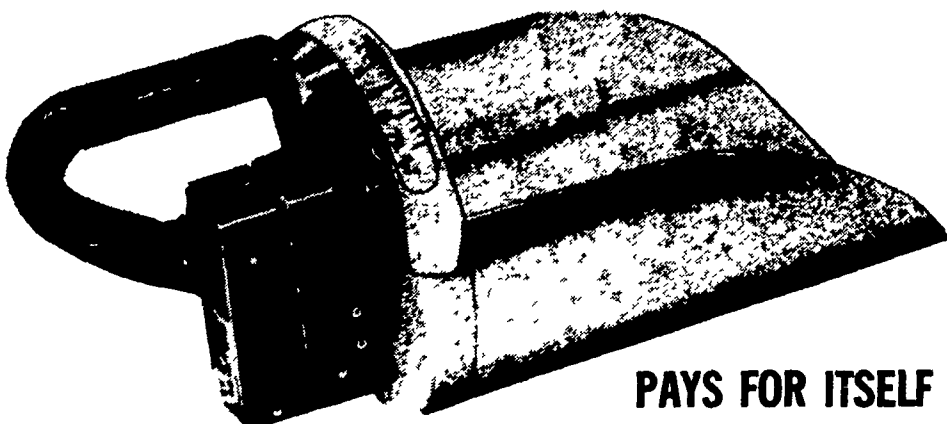
The agreement, besides assisting the farmer or landowner to comply with the state law, is also sort of a "roadmap" toward effective control. Each farm or piece of land infested may require a special plan to control

which varies by the type of crop, chemicals that can be used, special tillage practices etc.

First step toward a control agreement, says MDA's Johnsongrass control supervisor Jesse Crook, is to contact the county Johnsongrass supervisor or a member of the county Johnsongrass committee. Renters are urged to check with Johnsongrass authorities to make sure the ground they till is under a control agreement, and not to assume that the owner of the land has already arranged this.

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Convenience foods used by restaurants

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. - People who tire of eating easy-to-prepare convenience foods at home and treat themselves to a meal in a favorite restaurant may be surprised to know that that restaurant may also be using convenience foods.

According to Extension consumer specialists at The Pennsylvania State University, many restaurants and institutions have switched to convenience foods instead of cooking from scratch because of the high cost of

labor, energy, equipment and individual food ingredients, and the scarcity of people skilled in preparing food from scratch.

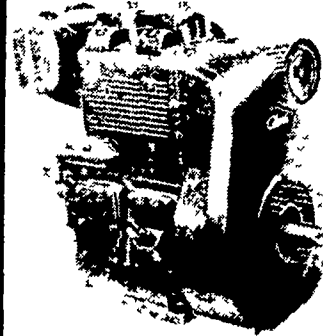
In the restaurants and institutions surveyed by the United States Department of Agriculture, the entrees

accounted for nearly two-fifths of the convenience items. Cakes and pastries ranked second, with side dishes third and dinners fourth.

According to the survey, the biggest users of convenience foods among institutions are schools and colleges, trailed by hospitals, feeding services in places of work, the military and correctional institutions.

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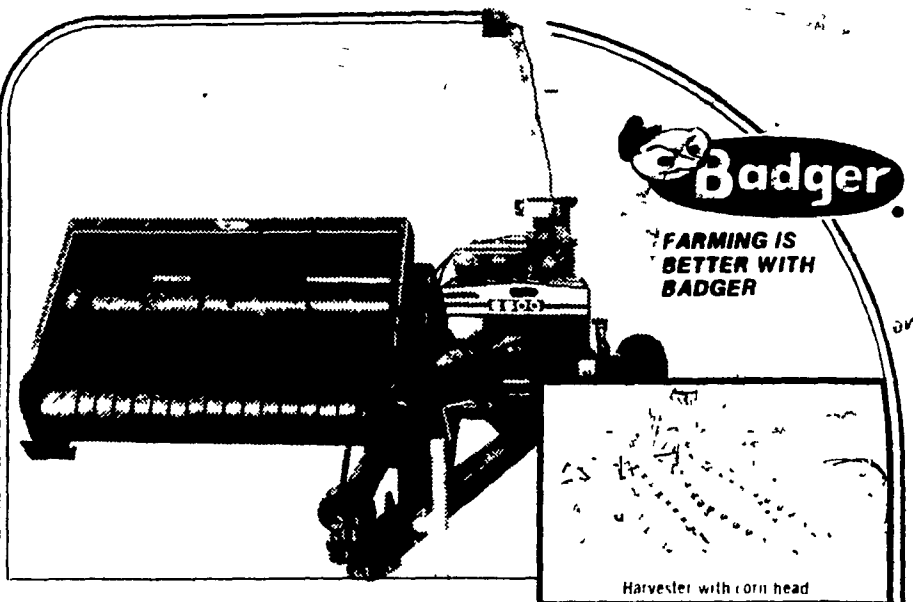
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