

The tent caterpillar is back

NEWARK, Del. - The tent caterpillars are back again. You can see their ugly nests along any country road now, or wherever the wild choke cherry grows.

This is one of the best known insects in our part of the country, yet many people confuse it with another "tent maker"—the Fall webworm. University of Delaware extension entomologist Dr. Dale Bray says one way to tell the difference, even from a car window, is by the tent or nest. The tent caterpillar seldom encloses leaves in its tent. The fall webworm, on the other hand, spins its nest around many leaves. Don't let the name of the Fall webworm deceive you—it's with us from late Spring until Fall, so you can't be sure of telling the two pests apart by the time of year.

Tent caterpillars feed on the cherry tree leaves for a few weeks, enlarging their tents as they themselves get fatter and longer. And then, on a warm day in May, they desert their trees-tents and all. They crawl about the countryside, sometimes climbing up the sides of houses and even entering homes. This understandably distresses homemakers, and such intruding caterpillars are likely to end up in the trash can.

Most of the rest find some dark, protected place where they can change from two-and-a-half inch brownish caterpillars with white stripes down their backs into a resting or pupal stage.

Each pupa is covered by a sulfur-yellow cocoon.

Come June, small reddish-brown moths will emerge from these cocoons and fly back to the cherry trees where the females will lay their eggs. Each female lays between 150 and 300 eggs, one next to the other, around twigs in such a way that they look very much like dark, brown, varnished collars. These eggs won't hatch until next year in late March or early April, when the cycle starts all over again.

Old-timers thought that the best way to control tent caterpillars was to burn them with a ball of flaming rags soaked in kerosene. Bray discourages this practice. Not only is this apt to set fire to the whole place, it harms the tree itself. It's better, says the en-

tomologist, to spray or dust the tents with a small amount of some insecticide when the tents are small. Materials which are effective include Sevin, Imidan, Dylox or Orthene at labeled rates.

Non-chemical controls for the pest include destroying egg masses before April, hand destruction of webs and larvae now, or removing the wild fruit trees that harbor them. If you're going to destroy the nests, do this at dusk while all the caterpillars are gathered inside. When using insecticides, it isn't necessary to spray the whole tree—just cover the tent and the branches closest to it. In most cases the best treatment is to ignore the insect. In a few weeks, there'll be more leaves on the trees and all is nice again.

Lamb care discussed

YORK, Pa. - The York County 4-H Lamb Club held its April meeting at the home of Charla, Jon, and Susan Janney. Linda Ebaugh and Charla Janney assisted Tony Dobrosky in demonstrating and explaining the selection, feeding, and care of project lambs.

The tentative date for the next meeting is May 11 at the home of Donald Flory. The program will be washing show lambs.

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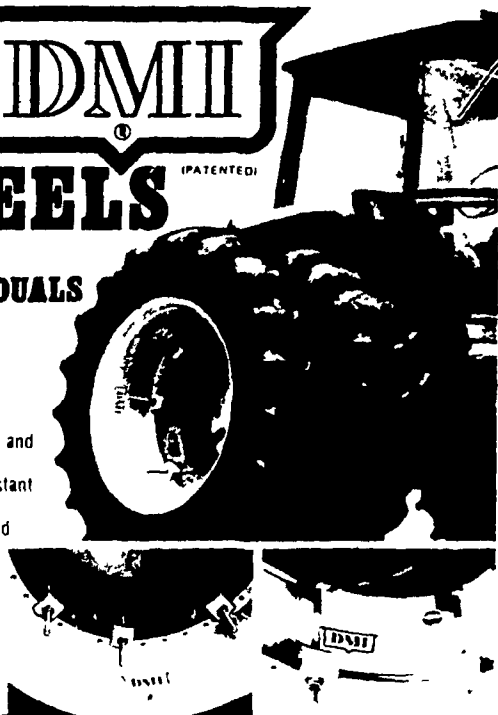
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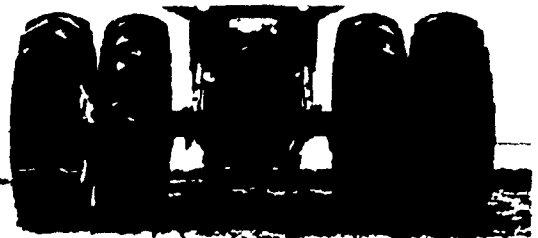
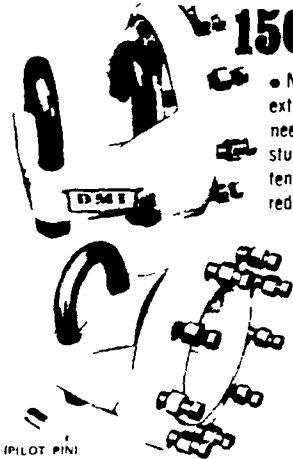
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May 20 deadline set in York for dairy princess applications

YORK, Pa. - The York County Dairy Princess and Promotion Committee has set Friday evening, June 24, for its annual pageant. Highlight of the evening festivities, scheduled for the 4-H Center near Bair, will be the crowning of the 1977-78 York County dairy princess. Mrs. Leo Rutter, 53 Lightner Road, York, is coordinating committee plans for the June program. Entry forms for the pageant are available from Mrs.

Rutter, or from county dairy farmers, and must be returned to her no later than May 20.

Eligibility requirements for contestants are:

- must live in York County.
- must be the daughter of a dairy farmer, dairy farm manager, herdsman, or dairy farm owner, or be the owner of more than one dairy animal prior to May 1.
- must have completed her junior year of high school prior to the pageant and not

be 22 before December 31, 1977.

-must be single and never married.

-must have parent's or guardian's consent.

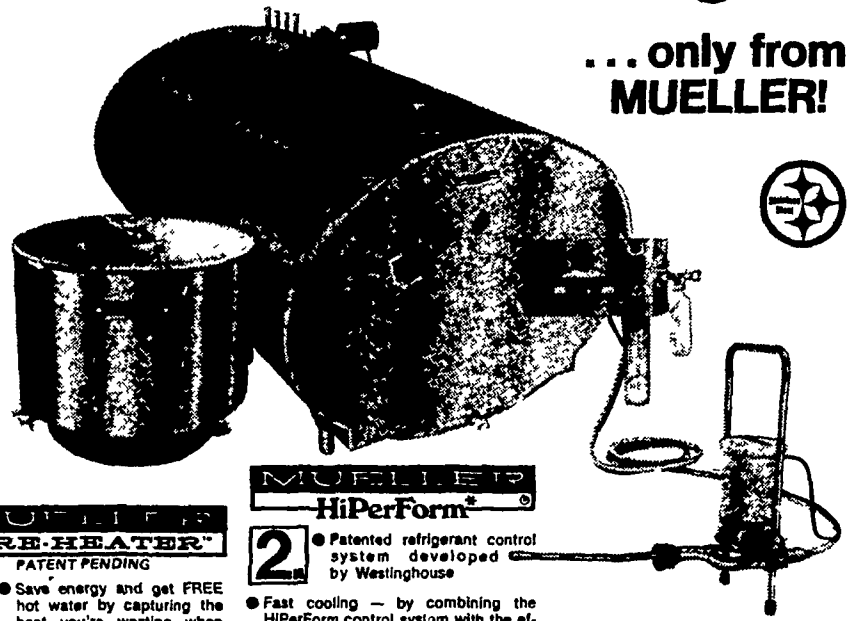
-former county winners are ineligible.

-county winner must attend Summer training seminar to participate in state pageant.

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