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Kempton is located on Rt. 143, five miles north of Rt. 22 from Lenhartsville Interchange (which is four miles east of Hamburg), and on Rt. 737, ten miles north of Kutztown. For More Information, Call: 215-756-6030

Gypsy moths

(Continued from Page 18)
 Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources, a long term control must eventually come about through biological control efforts such as the importation of natural predators for these moths. (Since they were originally foreign to the environment, their natural enemies must be imported from Europe and other parts of the world.)

Although this process is working, the government also does aerial spraying of insecticides in high-use, forested, residential, and recreational areas as a type of nuisance control.

"We do not do massive aerial spraying," notes Bill Slippey. "We keep the spray blocs as small as possible with a very narrow buffer. That way there is some migration activity, and should a virus take place, the migrating caterpillars would spread the spores. When a general collapse occurs, it goes into the spray blocs."

There are several other reasons behind using very small spray blocs. Very dense populations of gypsy moths are susceptible during the fifth and sixth instars (an instar is the time between larval molts) to a virus, to a bacteria, and to starvation. Therefore, they have a natural population check.

Critics of the spraying program have said that

large scale spraying prevents the natural control from operating since it has the effect of thinning out the population to a level at which it is less vulnerable to infectious epidemic diseases.

Another reason for using only small spray blocs is one of economics. Spraying is just too costly. The contract costs of spraying this year are \$7.09 per acre. A total of 137,000 acres was scheduled for treatment with a price tag of \$972,000.

The Bureau does not begin to approach the spraying as eradication because of the above reasons and several others. First of all, says Slippey, to eradicate the gypsy moth in Pennsylvania, all the infested areas around the state would have to be treated. That amounts to approximately one half the Commonwealth. Also, the building dynamics of the gypsy moth are such that if no caterpillars are destroyed, the insect will multiply 200 fold. (One female lays approximately 400 eggs in a sac with a sex ratio of 50/50.) Therefore, in order to keep the population steady, 97 per cent must be killed each year. Anything less than that and the population will increase.

To add to the problem, the gypsy moth has a delayed, or staggered, hatch. Therefore, spraying would have to be repeated several times to be

sure all the gypsy moths were killed.

At this point, natural predators, or parasites of the gypsy moth have a cumulative effect of killing 80 per cent of the insect population each year. High residential, recreational, and high-use forests are also sprayed.

The insecticide used is Dylox, which has been found to be the safest type of spray which can be used to combat these insects. This material causes no adverse effects to humans, pets, property, fish, game, and to most desirable insects such as many aquatic organisms and honey bees. It is, however, on the Russell Train list of 100 questionable products with a danger cited as cancer causing.

Spraying, which is just being completed in the Commonwealth this week, is tricky. The insecticide is sprayed onto the trees, so that when the caterpillars eat the leaves, they ingest the material which is poisonous to them.

The timing of the spraying program is critical, because the foresters must wait for a complete hatch and enough leaf surface to be effective. If they wait too long, they need more chemicals with less leaf surface. As a result, they have only seven to 10 days, approximately, to apply the insecticide in order to do a good job.

In the past, 90 per cent of the spraying has taken place in new areas each year.

"We don't spray the second year unless it is absolutely necessary," says Slippey.

This year the spraying

began in Cumberland and Perry Counties and then moved to Chester, Lebanon, and Lancaster. When completed, the pattern will include 24 counties where the gypsy is a serious problem.

Five contractors were involved in the work: Evergreen Helicopters, Inc., from Oregon; Island Helicopters Inc., New York; Helicopter Applicators, Inc., Maryland; AgRotors Inc., Gettysburg; and Ed and Dick's Air Service, Inc., Bloomsburg.

According to Slippey, the outlook for control of the gypsy moth is hopeful, but he added, "We are going to be involved in spraying each year for several more years."

"The amount of spending is determined by the state legislature," he points out. "Many years we could have used more, but it really depends on how much the people demand funds for the program."

"We're never going to be rid of the gypsy moth," he continued. "Just how long it will take until they become naturalized is a good question. I hope some day we reach that point."

Until then, precautions can be taken by all individuals to help prevent the spread of gypsy moths.

Since the female gypsy moth is flightless, she crawls into upright objects to lay her eggs in July and early August. While the trunks of trees are the usual egg laying sites, camping trailers, house trailers, cars, nursery stock, packing crates, and other movable objects serve, as well. Thus,

(Turn to Page 38)

Tractor Pulling Contest

- ★ Fri., June 16 - 6 30 PM - Modifieds & Super Stock - 5,000 Lb. & 7,000 Lb. Classes - Plus 9,000 Lb. Open
- ★ Sat., June 17 - 1-4 PM - 3 Classes for Berks & Lehigh Co Farmers Only - 7,000 Lb., 15,000 Lb., 17,000 Lb.
- ★ Sat., June 17 - 6 30 PM - Farm Sanction Class - 5,000 Lb., 9,000 Lb., 11,000 Lb. & 13,000 Lb. Classes.



- All Tractors Must Weigh In Before Scheduled Starting Times.
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