

Time for lawn repair and renovation

NEWARK, Del. — A lawn may need a minor repair job or perhaps even a complete renovation this Spring. Whichever the case, if seeding grass is involved, now is the time to do it, says University of Delaware Extension turf specialist Dr. William H. Mitchell. Grass seeded in early Spring should be well established by the time hot weather and crabgrass arrive.

Grass that has survived the Winter is turning green now, and damaged or bare areas in your lawn can be easily seen. The first step in renovation is to identify the cause of lawn failure. Knowing the cause of failure, one should be able to develop a program that will prevent a repeat performance.

The first place to look for trouble is in the soil, says Mitchell. Are the roots of surviving plants deep and well branched? Or are they restricted to the top two or three inches of soil? Is there a thatch layer which limits root development and

prevents the deep movement of lime and fertilizer?

If a thatch layer is present it is an indication that the soil is acid and activity of microbes and earthworms is reduced. A soil test will provide important information about level of acidity and nutrition. Sometimes the top three to four inches of soil will be well limed, but the underlying soil will be acid. This may cause a "perched root system" and plants that are very susceptible to Summer heat and drought.

One may find an unusual number of grubs in the top two or three inches of soil. If so, perhaps they have caused root pruning and grass damage. Does water stand in the damaged areas for several hours after a hard rain? If so, this could lead to poor soil aeration, which is death on grass roots.

Now, a person should look above the ground. What are the problems one finds there? There are a number of fungus diseases that can

weaken or destroy a stand of grass. One of these, dollar spot, causes small dead areas in the lawn. These may be two or three inches in diameter. If present last year, one can expect more trouble this Summer, warns the turf specialist. The resting stage of the fungus is very resistant to environmental extremes.

If large areas of grass died out rather quickly last year, a person can suspect chinch bugs. They like a warm, south slope. They may be there now, waiting for some tender young grass this year. They rarely cause problems on north slopes or under shade trees, so one can look for other culprits in these areas.

If crabgrass and other weeds took over the lawn last Summer, it probably was because the grass was very thin and offered little resistance to the weeds.

After the likely causes of lawn failure have been corrected or at least recognized, it's time to move ahead with the renovation.

Lime and fertilizer should be worked into the soil — if possible, to a depth of two to three inches. Fifty pounds of ground limestone and 15 pounds of 12-4-8 or equivalent fertilizer should be applied per 1000 square feet of lawn.

If one has a thatch problem, the soil should be worked well below that thatch layer.

Once the soil has been conditioned, a person is ready to seed his lawn. A good all-round lawn mixture should include the following: 50 per cent Kentucky bluegrass-use two or three cultivars, such as Baron, Bonniblu, Fylking, Adelphi, Merion; 25 per cent red fescue; 25 per cent Pennfina, Manhattan, or other fine

textured perennial ryegrass. One should seed at a rate of three pounds per 1000 square feet.

If one needs additional help trouble-shooting and renovating a lawn, Mitchell suggests a person call his county Extension office in Newark, Dover or Georgetown for further information.

'Piggyhood school' attracts women

COLUMBIA, Mo. - "Feminine farrowing schools" which started in Missouri last Fall are continuing to draw top enrollments.

"By this fall, more than 600 women will have attended these schools," says Leroy Rottman, University of Missouri-Columbia farm management specialist.

"The schools are 'hands on' affairs where women learn about preparing sows before farrowing, artificial

respiration, clipping needle teeth, giving shots, docking, castration, and clean up."

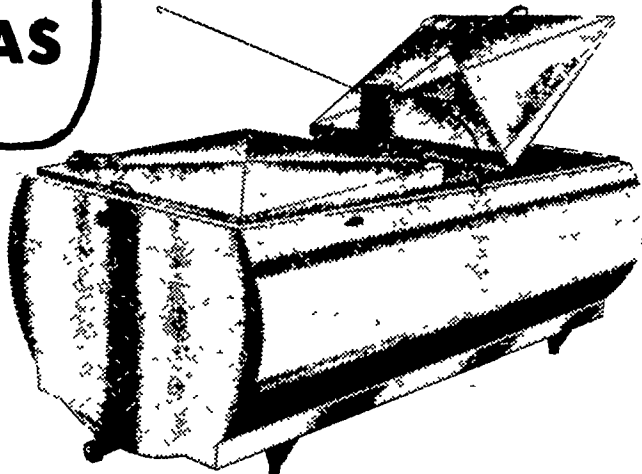
"Other classroom topics deal with feeding, breeding, disease control, marketing and other topics."

Rottman says the special "schools on piggyhood" have drawn so much interest because, "We have already have several hundred women in Missouri in charge of at least part of the swine operation and many others starting in the business."

"Besides, hogs have been the most profitable agricultural enterprise in Missouri over the past 10 years."



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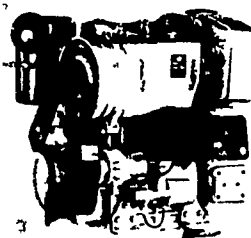
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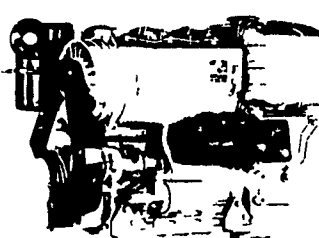
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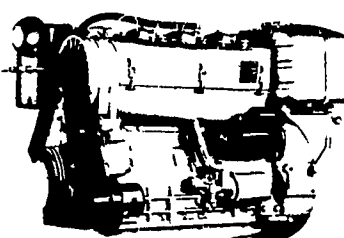
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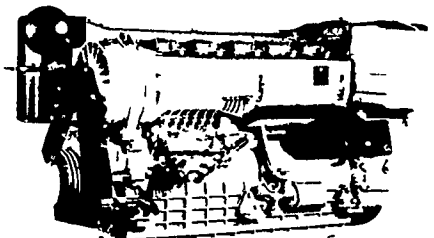
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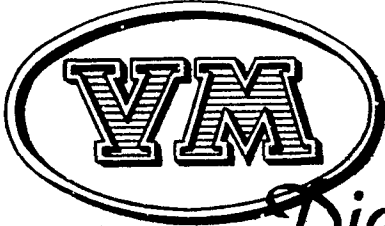
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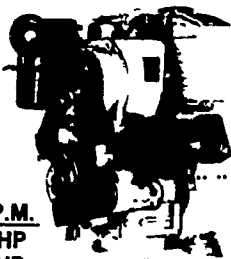


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