

Successful microwaving of roasts suggested

CHICAGO, Ill. — Consumers can get satisfactory results when microwave roasting simply by turning down the oven's power setting, recommends Gay Starrak, National Live Stock and Meat Board Consumer Services Dept. director.

In addition to cooking on a lower power wattage to

improve roasting results, Starrak suggests consumers also be selective when buying roasts since certain meat cuts are more appropriate for microwave roasting than are others.

Starrak detailed guidelines for increasing satisfaction from microwaved beef, pork and

lamb roasts at the recent annual meeting of the Cooking Appliance Section of the International Microwave Power Institute in Atlanta, Ga.

Her work is part of the Meat Board's on-going effort to promote equipment standardization by microwave oven manufacturers and to develop recipes, cooking techniques and other benefits to microwave oven users.

"Lowering the power results in a noteworthy improvement in the quality of microwaved roasts. Roasts cooked at low power - about 200 watts - are more tender, juicy and uniformly done than are those cooked at higher powers."

Tests conducted at the Meat Board test kitchen showed that turning down the power not only results in a better product, but more of it. In most instances, losses recorded for roasts cooked on high, or 650 watts, were doubled those of similar roasts cooked at about 200 watts. Excess loss results in increased cost-per-serving, Starrak noted.

Though low wattage lengthens cooking time,

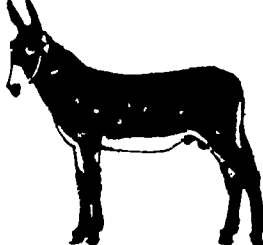
cooks can minimize the increase - and losses - by starting the roast on high for 5 to 10 minutes before turning down to 30 per cent power.

Cooks really squeezed for time can achieve acceptable roasts in most cases at a medium, or 50 per cent power setting. Somewhat greater losses will result, she added, and center and

end of roast temperatures will vary more.

Also important to successful microwave roasting is the selection of appropriate meat cuts. Tender, boneless cuts of compact uniform shape weighing 3 to 4 lbs. are top choices, although some bone-in cuts are satisfactory, Starrak said.

Appropriate beef roasts include top round, tip (cap off), rump, rib eye and rib. Good pork roast choices include boneless top loin (double) smoked ham, canned ham, center loin and center ham slice. When selecting lamb roasts, one should consider boneless leg and loin and bone-in center leg, shank half and rib.



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Md. to continue to battle the cereal leaf beetle

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Biological warfare against the cereal leaf beetle in Maryland will commence June 7 with the Maryland Department of Agriculture, the USDA and the Cooperative Extension Service initiating a combined assault on the pest.

Battle plans call for a USDA plane loaded with canisters of tiny wasp parasites to hedge hop across the state delivering the "beetle bombs" to ground forces. These troops will then deploy the living weapons to pre-selected fields of oats, wheat, barley and rye in an effort to cut down the grain robbing cereal leaf beetle.

The parasitic wasps actually use the cereal leaf beetle larvae as their food source and thus effectively reduce future beetle populations. The wasps will not affect humans nor animals, and once established, the parasites will greatly reduce the need for pesticides to control the cereal leaf beetle.

Small grain fields will be surveyed by Extension agents in each county to determine whether they contain two or more cereal leaf beetle larvae per square foot. Those fields with sufficient beetle populations will be selected as parasite release sites.

Bill Gimpel of the MDA Plant Protection Section says, "Maryland farmers

who feel they have cereal leaf beetle infestations and who wish to participate at no cost in this year's program, may yet have time to get their fields designated as control areas if they get in touch immediately with their county extension agent."

The key word in Gimpel's offer is "immediately". With time drawing near for the parasite release, a survey of the field must be made and a determination given as to whether it qualifies for inclusion in the June 7 program.

Although both adult beetles and the larvae damage grain crops, most of the damage is done by larvae as they feed on the leaves. Any fields heavily

infested could have its grain yield reduced by as much as 30 per cent. This degree of damage is not common locally, and the joint effort by MDA, USDA and the County Extension Service is designed to prevent it from becoming a reality.

The cereal leaf beetle came into the US from Europe and was first discovered in Michigan in 1962. It has now spread to most states in the east and south and to many other parts of the country. By 1975, all counties in Maryland had reported some degree of infestation.

Parasitic control methods have proven effective in Europe, and similar optimism is being voiced for local control.

Woodlot course offered

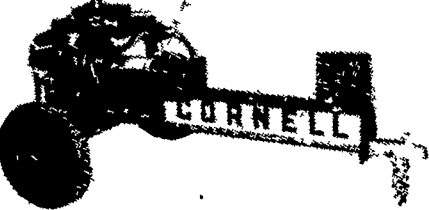
UNIVERSITY PARK — What do you plan to do with your woodlot? Improve it? Enlarge it? Build a hunting lodge? Plant Christmas trees? Sell logs or lumber?

Extension specialists at The Pennsylvania State University say you may own woodland and idle farm land for profit or recreation but management of the area is needed for proper resource development. To help owners manage woodlands, a correspondence course on Small Woodlot Forestry has been written. Lessons give directions on how to control tree species by planting

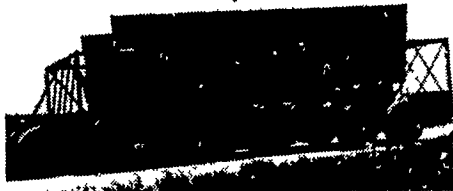
seedlings, encourage growth of tall straight trunks by proper spacing and removal of wood trees. Wildlife can also be protected by growing food and cover plants.

To enroll in the course, write Forestry, Box 5000, University Park, Pa. 16802. Make check for \$4.50 plus 25 cents postage payable to Penn State. The correspondence course program offers the option of returning question papers to Penn State for correction and credit toward a certificate of accomplishment or using the course as a reference.

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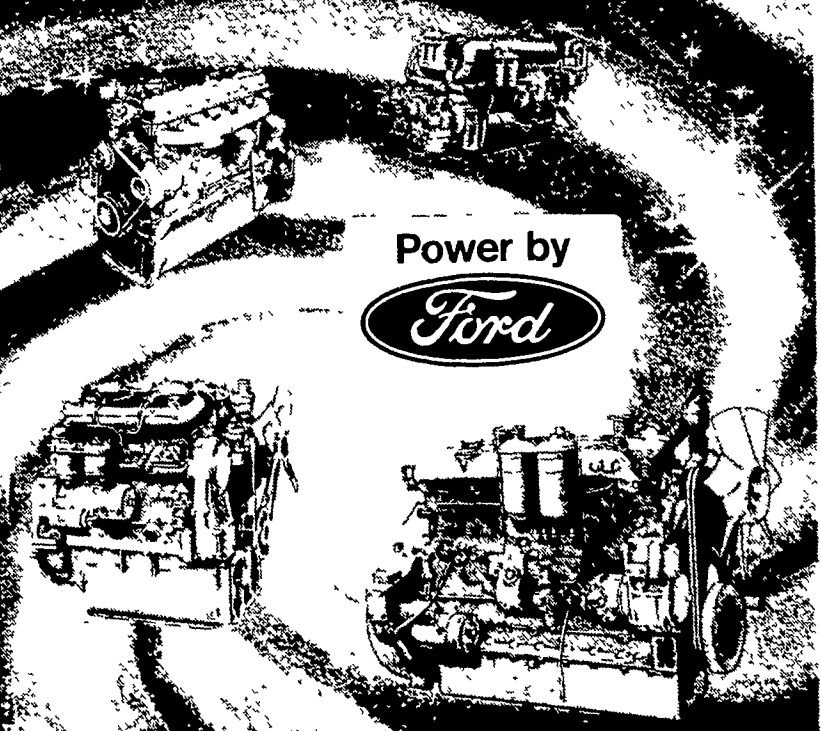
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