

How cultural practices help farm insect control

difference in insect pressure. With both soybeans and corn you can run into trouble when annual grasses are allowed to develop. These are a favorite egg laying site for the fall armyworm as well as certain other related pests.

For the same reason, it's important to get good kill of a small grain cover.

Besides rapid canopy closing, weed control can be favored by tillage in soybeans where row spacing permits. If your herbicide has been applied properly, cultivation helps remove weeds — particularly annual grasses with herbicide-stunted roots — so you get cleaner ground around your plants.

One cultural practice which shouldn't be overlooked is seed treatment with an insecticide, as well as a fungicide. On soybeans, in particular, this is a cheap form of insurance against seed corn maggot and other soil insects that attack the germinating seed.

As you prepare for the coming growing season, keep these cultural factors in mind. Where they fit into your production schedule they can help you reduce insect pressure on your crops this summer.

NEWARK, Del. — Little research has been done concerning the effects various tillage practices, have on insect pests of field crops. University of Delaware extension pest management specialist Mark Graustein thinks this is an area where farmers could use some enlightening.

Over the past few years he and fellow entomologists at the University have noted a number of ways in which cultural practices appear to influence insect populations in crops like corn and soybeans.

In the case of soil insects, for instance, he says it's generally felt that the less tillage there is, the more favorable the environment for soil insect pests. Apparently there's something to be said for the physical movement of the soil in their suppression.

Cultivation kills some, while it buries others. It also eliminates weeds and other hosts which can encourage pest build-ups. This is one reason why extension

specialists often recommend interrupting a no-tillage regimen with a conventional planting every few years.

As far as insects that live above the ground are concerned, no-tillage or minimum tillage appears to work against the buildup of pests like the European corn borer and the Mexican bean beetle.

"There is evidence," says Graustein, "that no-till interferes with the increase of these populations."

With the bean beetle this may be due to the planting date when soybeans are double-cropped after barley and wheat. In this case the beans are planted late enough to miss the first beetle infestation.

With early corn, growth is a little slower in no-till plantings at the early stage of development. And since early planted conventional corn gets off to a faster start, the corn borer is attracted to it first.

Though this isn't the total answer, the entomologist says it may be one ex-

planation for the greater pressure on such early, conventional plantings.

Row spacing also has an effect on insect populations. In corn, narrow rows may favor dispersal of European corn borer larvae. Once plants touch, and borer is freer to move about and spread.

On the other hand, in soybeans, the quicker the canopy closes the less egg laying there'll be by moths of pod feeding insects — especially the corn earworm.

As suggested earlier, timing of plantings is quite important for exposure to most of our major pests — especially the corn borer and bean beetle.

The earlier the crop is planted, the greater it's chances of suffering economic damage from either pest, says Graustein. This is because it's exposed to overwintering populations of these insects.

Weed control is another factor that can make a

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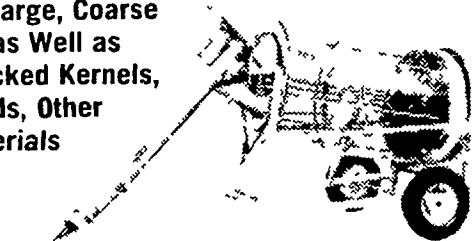


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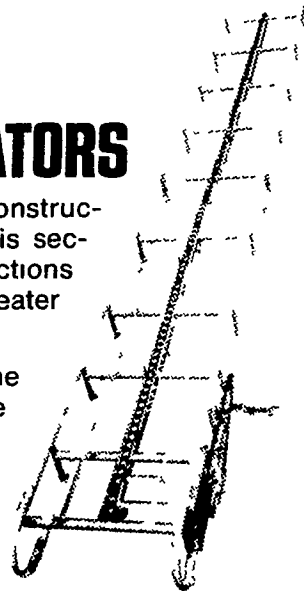
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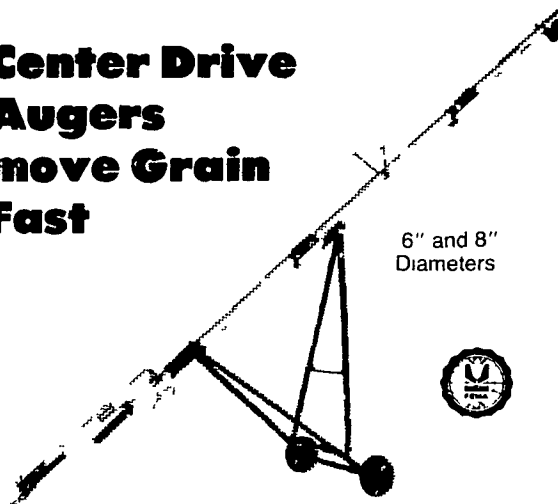
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Order 4 Class I price up

ALEXANDRIA, VA — Middle Atlantic Order Market Administrator Joseph D. Shine Monday announced a Class I milk price of \$14.46 per hundredweight for June 1980.

This price is nine cents above the May price and up \$1.50 from last June.

Order 4 prices are announced for milk testing 3.5 percent butterfat, f.o.b. plants located within 55 miles of Philadelphia, and also within 75 miles from the nearer of Washington, DC or Baltimore, MD.

There is also a 6-cent direct-delivery differential applicable to producer milk received at plants located within 55 miles of Philadelphia.

Shine announced a Class II milk price of \$11.61 per hundredweight for April 1980 and a butterfat differential of 15.4 cents for the month.

The Class II milk price was up five cents from the previous month while the butterfat differential increased four tenths of a cent.

These class prices are based on the April 1980 Minnesota-Wisconsin manufacturing milk price of \$11.68 per hundredweight adjusted to a 3.5 percent butterfat content.

The USDA reported that the wholesale price of Grade A butter at Chicago for April was \$1.3426 per pound and the nonfat dry milk price was \$.8711 per pound, f.o.b. plants in the Chicago area.

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