

Tomato growers

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variety, it may not have received the irrigations soon enough because its fruit size was smaller than usual.

The following insect and disease control spray program was used: July 3 — Cygon 267 + Bravo tank-mix, July 24 — Copper Count N + Dithane M-45 tank-mix, August 14 — Kocide 101 + Dithane M-45 tank-mix.

The copper sprays were included because there was a little Bacterial Speck early in the season. According to Mr. Van Kirk these sprays eliminated almost all Speck except for some on Red Rock at harvest time.

Because of the hot, dry weather, less than 50 percent of the tomato fields received the normal ethephon application. The earliest maturing 10 acres with the heaviest foliage received 6 pints of Ethrel per acre, the middle 10 acres received only 3 pints per acre and the latest maturing 10 acres received no Ethrel application. Despite these scheduling

treatments, all of the tomatoes were still harvested in a two-week period (August 28-September 13) because of the weather.

A 1978 Model Button-Johnson self-propelled tomato harvester with an electronic sorter was used to harvest the crop. The machine and 8 men and women sorters usually operated from about 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. with a 30-minute lunch break. The tomatoes were harvested directly into the bulk semi-trailers used to haul them to the Furman plant.

Although the dry, dusty conditions were hard on the sorters, these same conditions were very conducive to full operating machine efficiency.

Leon Epler Farms previously grew processing tomatoes through 1968, then dropped the crop because of problems with migrant laborers. They began growing tomatoes again in 1979 after buying the Button-Johnson harvester. Next year they would like to expand their tomato acreage if they can receive a good contract price.

Raymond Martin

Raymond Martin, R3, Selinsgrove, won the award for the highest tomato yield in the Class 4 Hand-Harvest competition for growers with 5 to 14 acres.

Martin picked 159.01 tons of tomatoes for Furman Canning Co. on 5 acres for a \$180 per ton average yield. Varieties grown were H-1370, C-37, US-141, US-28, Red Rock and Pik-Red (only 2000 plants). Georgia-grown transplants. The latter is a fresh-market variety which did not hold up well later in the season.

Part of the 5-acre tomato crop followed a sod crop and part followed corn stubble. Although Penn State soil test recommendations were followed for the commercial fertilizer and lime applications, liberal amounts of mixed cattle and horse manure were also applied. Martin attempts to obtain a population of about 7000 plants per acre by spacing his transplants 5 feet between rows with 15 inches between plants in the row.

At transplant time (May 12 to 26), Martin used a starter solution comprised of 3 pounds of 10-52-8 per 50 gallons of water. Although a herbicide was used, Martin also cultivated and spot hoed the field. Because of access to water from a creek nearby, several timely overhead sprinkler irrigations were applied to this crop. The irrigations were probably the key to Raymond Martin's success this past season.

For disease control Bravo was alternated with a tank-mix of Kocide 101 plus Dithane M-45, Diazinon, Guthion, and Sevin were used for insect control. A boom

sprayer was used for all pesticide applications.

Family and neighbors were employed to hand-harvest the crop. Tomatoes were picked into 5/8 baskets and then dumped into a straight truck bed which was lined with polyethylene. Since no ethephon was applied to ripen the crop, each field had to be picked four times. The first delivery to Furman's was on August 14 and the last delivery was on September 30.

Only the above three contestants entered this year's contest, therefore no entries were received in any of the other classes.

Booklet available on soil, water

WASHINGTON, D.C. — USDA's Soil Conservation Service recently issued a booklet describing the current state of the nation's non-federal lands and problems of erosion, loss of prime farmlands and wetlands and the expansion of irrigation even as many water tables are falling.

The booklet is titled, "America's Soil and Water Condition and Trends" and is available from county offices of the Soil Conservation Service and from the SCS Information Division, room 0054-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250. Phone requests (202) 447-5063.

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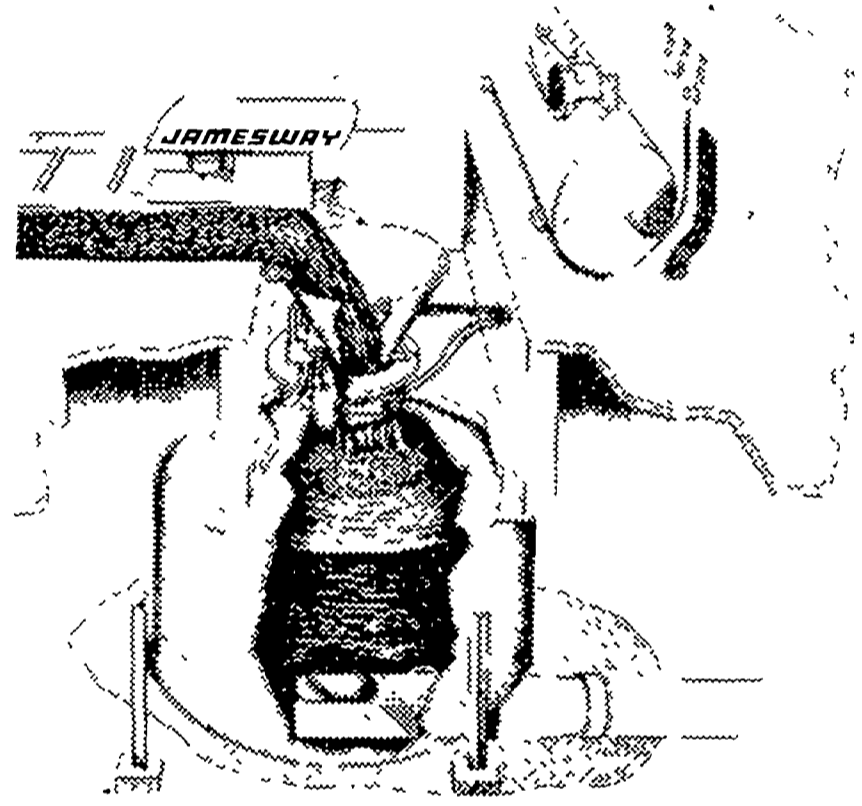


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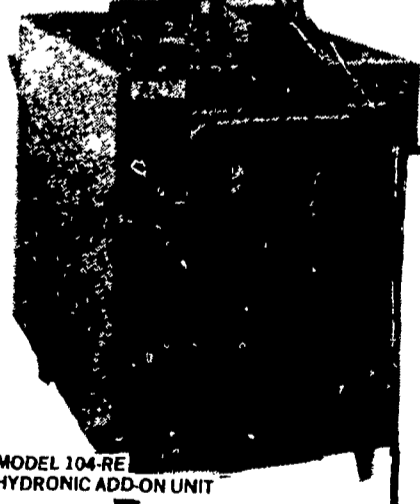
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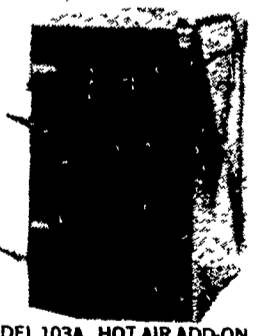
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