

## Md. wheat suffers the effects of disease trio

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — Maryland's soft red winter wheat crop has been hit by a triple whammy of fungus disease problems this year. The situation has adversely affected both grain quality and yields.

The culprits are scab, powdery mildew and Septoria glume blotch. These three diseases are not uniformly serious in any one area of the state, notes David J. Sammons, small grain research worker and assistant professor of

agronomy at the University of Maryland. And they affect the wheat crop in different ways.

Their invasion was aided by an insidious combination of weather factors this spring and summer, Sammons says. This pattern included a cool, wet period when the wheat grain heads were forming. It was followed by hot, humid conditions during much of the time when the heads were filling out.

Heavy rains over the Fourth of

July holiday weekend were a final blow to some fields of unharvested wheat, particularly in western Maryland.

Scab has been receiving the most publicity this summer because it affects the heads of the wheat plant, causing lightweight "scabby" grain which brings discounts in the marketplace.

Buy powdery mildew is really a more serious disease, Sammons claims, because it generally kills or weakens wheat plants so that yields are greatly reduced. The weakened plants also are susceptible to lodging and later-occurring diseases, such as scab.

Septoria glume blotch is often confused with scab, Sammons comments, since its symptoms are similar to "old" scab; i.e., the grain heads are smaller than normal and appear dark in color.

The geographical area most affected by scab this year in the Mid-Atlantic region includes southern Pennsylvania and most of the counties in Maryland's Piedmont area, stretching westward along the Mason-Dixon Line from Cecil to Frederick counties.

Scab infestation has been the worst in history for some isolated wheatfields in the northern tier counties, Sammons reports. An

example is the University of Maryland's agronomy-dairy research farm in Howard county.

But, overall, the Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station research worker doesn't think the scab problem is any worse now than it was in 1980 or anytime in the last five years.

Powdery mildew is the disease that is more prevalent this year in Maryland wheatfields than ever, Sammons comments. Losses were especially severe in the central section of the Eastern Shore, including University of Maryland research plots at the Wye Institute in Queen Annes county.

Nearly all varieties of wheat currently being grown in Maryland are susceptible to powdery mildew, Sammons notes. And some of the newer varieties, including Hart, appear to be even more vulnerable than their other cousins. Fortunately, good genetic resistance to mildew is available in some newly released wheat varieties that are not yet readily available to farmers.

However, there appears to be no genetic resistance to scab in sight for wheat plants. And no recommended fungicide treatments are currently available. The best defense against scab is a good

stand of vigorous wheat plants, Sammons states.

For farmers who have not yet harvested their wheat, he offers these tips for avoiding scab discounts in the marketplace: open combine fan inlets wider than normal to blow away most of the lightweight scabby grain; and avoid harvesting "greasy-looking" or blackish areas in a field. These spots are an indication of the localized nature of most scab infestations.

## York fashion review

(Continued from Page D9)

The final senior contestant, Dawn Raubenstine of the Hanover club, chose to make a feminine, long-sleeved dress that will be perfect for anytime of year. Dawn, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Raubenstine, Hanover, used a silk quiana material in muted browns, for her dress pattern which included a high lace trimmed collar, elastic waist, and ribbon accents across the bodice.

The more than 60 4-H'ers who competed in the fashion show were awarded certificates of participation and a medals of honor. The top winners in both the junior

and senior categories received ribbons and gifts for their outstanding efforts.

After the upcoming regional competition, four lucky 4-H'ers will go on to represent the area at the state 4-H Achievement Days in August, according to Marcel Seckman, York Extension Home Economist.

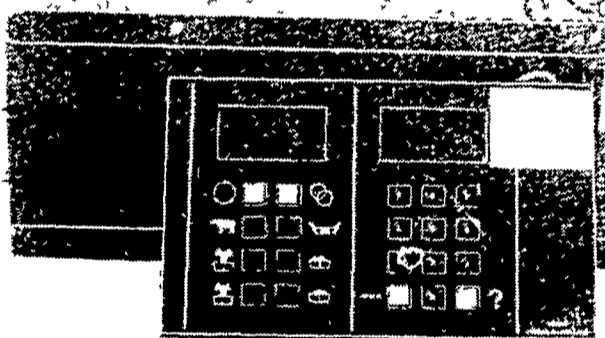
This first contest may seem like a 'stroll through the park' to these finalists who still have some of the toughest, and most grueling competition yet to come when they travel on to regional dress review next week.



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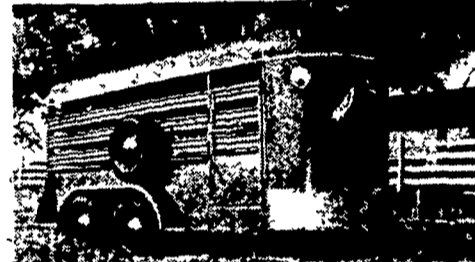
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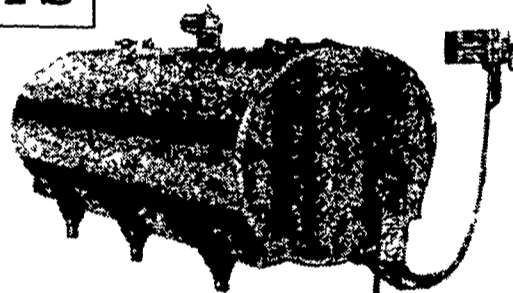
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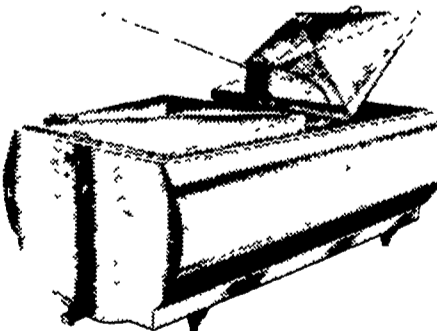
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