

More N.Y. land regulated against potato pest

NEW YORK, N.Y. — More of upstate New York has been put under regulations to prevent spread of the golden nematode, a destructive potato pest, U.S. Department of Agriculture officials have announced.

"The golden nematode is an extremely tiny eelworm, but it can run a potato crop if not controlled," said Dick Backus, an official with USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

The nematode, found in the United States only on Long Island and a small area in upstate New York, attacks roots of Irish potatoes and a few other plants, drastically lowering yields. Since it is so small and can live undetected for years in the soil, it spreads easily to new areas, according to Backus. The regulations restrict movement of potatoes, soil and other items that could spread the pest.

Backus said the Arkport Muck area in the town of Dansville and a single property in the town of Cohocton, both in Steuben county, have been put under regulation as a result of new finds of the nematode.

Previously regulated areas include Nassau and Suffolk counties on Long Island, additional

parts of Steuben county and parts of Cayuga, Genesee, Orleans, Seneca and Wayne counties, all in New York.

Another revision prohibits use of

burlap bags for shipments of potatoes from regulated areas to Puerto Rico, where commercial production of potatoes has begun recently.

These changes are emergency

measures that became effective upon publication in the March 22 Federal Register. Written comments regarding the changes may be sent to T.J. Lanier, Regulatory

Support Staff, USDA-APHIS-PPQ, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, MD 20782. Comments received by May 21 will be considered in preparing the final regulations.

Test your soil first for lawn maintenance

LANCASTER — Experts don't start with a guess — they test! If you're getting ready to fertilize your lawn, get the most from your dollar. Test your soil before you spread. Soil test kits are available from your county Extension office

and are sometimes available at large garden centers and nurseries.

After the analysis is complete, you'll receive recommendations about how to feed your lawn —

follow the advice you get. Extension agronomists at Penn State say a regular lawn fertilization program is necessary if you expect to maintain a good quality lawn.

Grass plants normally need nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium (potash) in larger amounts than can be supplied naturally from the soil. Nitrogen is essential for vegetative growth and good green color. Potassium promotes growth resistance to disease and provides extra strength for winter hardiness.

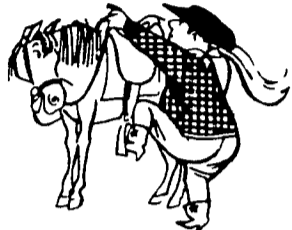
When you buy fertilizer, don't just look at the size of the bag — the value depends on the total amount of plant food inside the

bag. The law requires that the total amount of plant nutrients be shown on the label.

When you apply your fertilizer, be careful. All fertilizers can burn if improperly applied — quickly available water soluble nitrogen will burn more severely than those containing slowly available water insoluble nitrogen. Always apply fertilizers when the grass leaves are completely dry, and water thoroughly immediately after application.

If you have questions about getting started on your fertilizing program, ask your county Extension office for assistance and advice.

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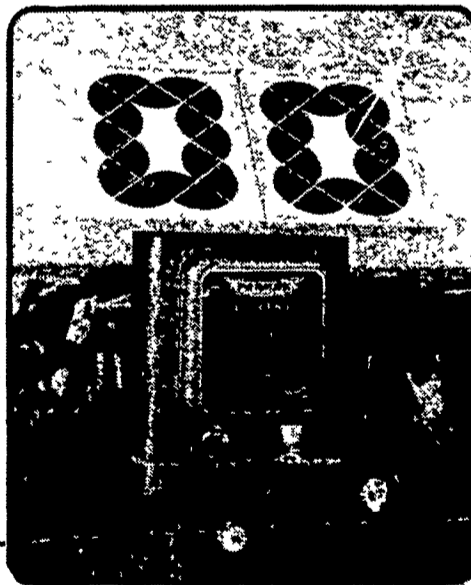
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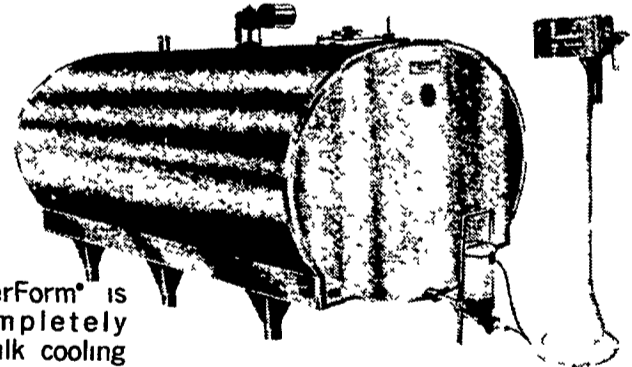
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