

Get A Handle On Flies

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done to see if it can be useful on a practical basis," said Ressler.

Other research work involves using parasitic wasps to control the fly population.

At the Donald Burkholder farm in Host, special parasitic wasps wander the manure pit piles underneath layer houses. Burkholder, who manages two houses (one with 110,000 birds and the other with 125,000 birds) for Wenger's

Feeds, said he is "completely sold" on the use of the wasps.

They have dramatically reduced the fly populations in both houses, saving him money.

He said it was a "cheap investment" that goes a long way to reduce costs of fogging. The wasps cost \$330 per house.

To monitor the flies, 10 cards are used per house. One house measures 600 feet long. One card

observed recently had hardly any fly markings at all. Before, when a person would enter the house, flies would swarm the length of the house. Egg fly droppings were a constant problem. Now, after entering the house, with the use of wasps, only a few flies are present.

"It really works," he said. "I'm totally sold on the idea." Estimated savings are in the thousands of dollars per year.

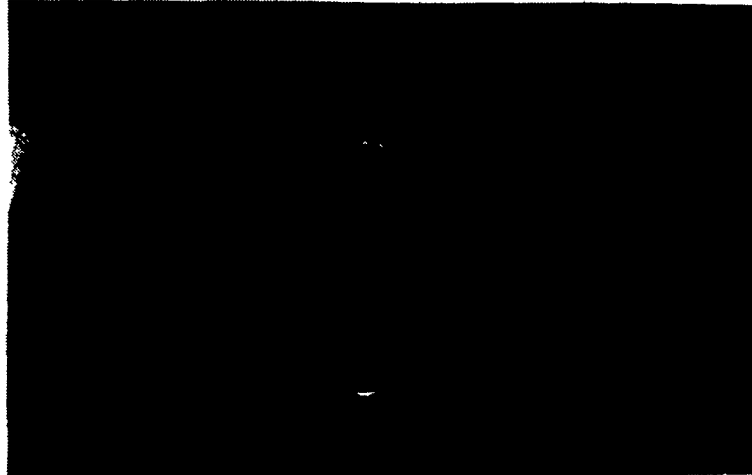
"Right now, we're looking at everything that we can think of to control flies," said Ressler. "As the urban population increases, the problem becomes more severe."

The Lancaster County extension office, and other extension offices throughout the state, field calls of complaints of flies from suburban farm neighbors.

"The other thing that is compounding it is nutrient manage-

ment concerns," said Ressler. "We're taking manure to fields that in recent years haven't had manure. The fields are often near suburban people. So when you put manure on those fields, it does a good thing as far as spreading nutrients around, but you also spread the flies in there and non-farm people won't be particularly happy."

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The parasitic wasps have invaded the fly larvae, effectively killing them, in the manure pit in one of Donald Burkholder's layer houses.



Before covering, Penn State extension agents inspected the manure, containing fly larvae and pupae. Some measurement of the presence of ammonia was undertaken. After two weeks, the plastic was removed, indicating little odor — and the presence of dead fly material. Here, Clyde Meyers, left, and Charles Pitts inspect the covered manure.

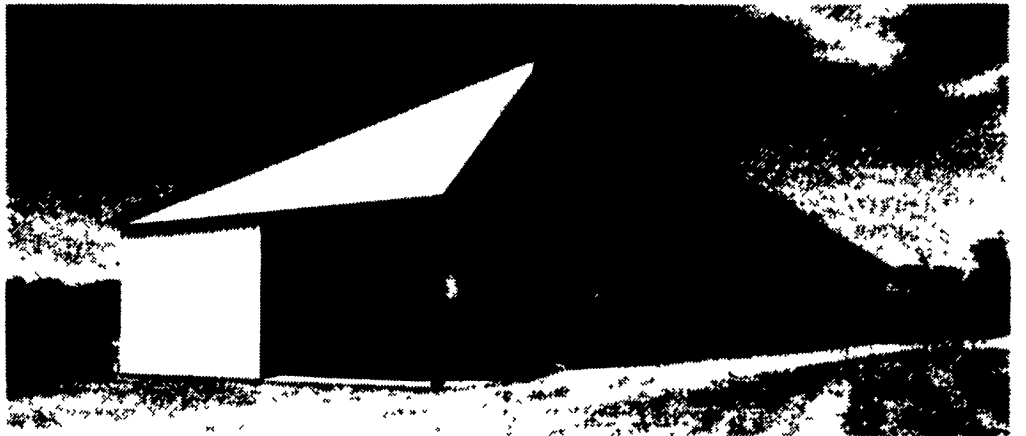
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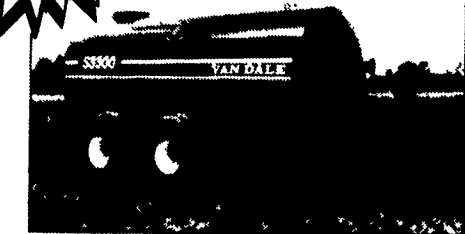
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