

only one growing season of data, I believe this information will be very useful when discussing the use and value of seeded grass with producers.

Editor's Note: Mary Schrader can be contacted at NRCS, PO Box 186, Benkelman, NE 69021, (308) 423-2402, ext. 3, or at mary.schrader@ne.usda.gov.

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DOM/CP ratio showed a need for a protein supplement almost three weeks earlier, because of the dry weather, than in past years.

I was encouraged by the data I re-

ceived this past summer. Many times I hear landowners say "my cows won't eat those grasses" or "these grasses won't maintain a cow-calf herd" (when referring to seeded grasses). Although I have

Lab Plays Key Role In U.S. Research

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Parasitic wasps, flies, fungi, and bacteria abound at the Agricultural Research Service's (ARS's) European Biological Control Laboratory (EBCL) in Montpellier, France.

There, ARS and collaborating scientists are subjecting these organisms to a battery of tests aimed at pitting them against non-native insects and weeds that endanger U.S. agriculture.

Montpellier, on France's Mediterranean coast, is a strategic locale. From this seaside city, EBCL scientists can hop flights to the pests' points of origin in North Africa, the Middle East, Balkans and Asia, where natural enemies can be found. Typically, they'll explore sites where the crops, climate or habitat matches a particular U.S. region where a pest has become established and a biocontrol agent is needed.

Entomologists Kim Hoelmer and Dominique Coutinot, for example, are now rearing Hymenopterous wasps, collected last fall from Tunisia, that parasitize olive fruit flies. In California, the

fly's establishment threatens the state's \$33.9 million olive industry.

Charles Pickett, a California Department of Food and Agriculture cooperator, is seeking fruit fly parasites that could be released into olive groves as part of an integrated approach to controlling the pest.

Tim Widmer, meanwhile, is testing the host specificity, virulence and other features of dozens of fungi and bacteria cultured from salt cedar, yellow starthistle, giant reed and other Eurasian weeds. While collecting diseased reed specimens in Nepal's wetland areas in September, the plant pathologist picked up — and had to pick off — another inhabitant: leeches.

Some other pests on the EBCL "hit-list" include diamondback moths, gypsy moths, pink hibiscus mealybug, Asian long-horned beetles, wheat stem sawflies, apple leafrollers, knapweed, hoary cress, and rush skeleton weed.

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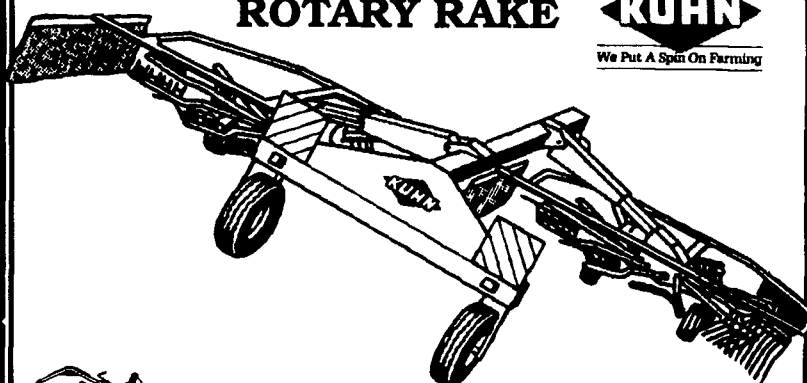
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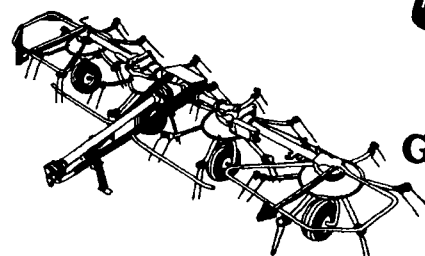
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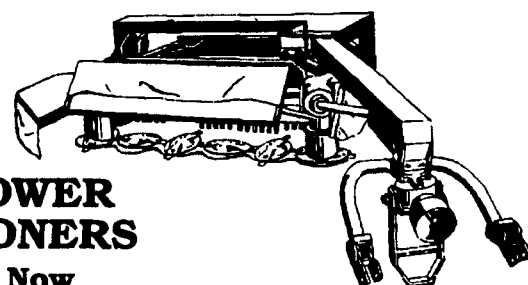
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