

Army of Workers Battle Blister Rust Menace

White Pine Forests Of Northwest In Grip Of Disease Deadly To Trees—CCC Fights Spread

By Valerie Watrous

CREEPING stealthily into the last stand of white pine trees in the Northwest, just as a cancer secretly destroys a healthy human body, Blister Rust is swiftly taking its toll from the most valuable timber in America. To combat this dread scourge, 6,600 men drawn from the W. P. A. relief rolls, and 3,500 young men from the C. C. C. camps will be thrown into the forests within the next thirty days, according to James E. Bradford, director of the National Emergency Council offices in the State of Washington.

Introduced first into Canada, where it was discovered in 1923 in a shipment of nursery stock



Workers leave Spokane for "Rust Control" Project in Pine Forests of the Great Inland Empire.

before October 10, 1936. It is expected that the entire area will be covered. This is the last section of the 2,176,000 acres on which this eradication program was begun nearly three years ago," Bradford concluded.

UPROOTED bushes will be piled in cleared areas. After the rains begin in the fall, foresters will burn these brush-heaps. This is but one of the methods of eradicating the pest.

Chemical spraying is also being done. A cheap and deadly mixture has been developed that has proved very effective. Wherever possible, along the lowlands, in the valleys, and river bottoms, great tractors are being driven, uprooting the Blister Rust hosts.

This brush will also be piled in long windrows and later burned during the rainy season.

In addition to this final wide-spread program for the control of the Blister Rust, which no private individual or group could ever finance, every farmer from the northern-most reaches of the Pacific Coast down to the last lone needle pine in California, is urged to uproot the wild currant wherever it is found on his lands. When the brush is well dried in the fall, and the rains have reduced forest-fire hazard, every vestige of it should be burned.

Bushes of the domesticated currant and gooseberry should also be frequently sprayed. At the first appearance of that deadly tan spotting of the leaves, get out the



This group of men is the Civilian Army which fights the menace of Blister Rust.

Just A Moment

By Bud Landis

HERE'S a little sound advice for the noise abatement committee, if it isn't making too much racket to hear:

Something must be done about that early bird who races his motor every morning when us worms are trying to sleep.

You know, the guy who backs his car out of the garage with a combustion chorus that listens like the second battle of the Marne, and shakes everything, including your faith in mankind.

Now, it's not entirely because of the audible disturbance that the throttle-toter should be throttled. No, indeed. The fellow is actually cutting off his engine in its prime.

That is to say, those violent commencement exercises create metal anguish. No oil can get started fast enough under those

conditions to liquidate the mechanical parts.

Of course, the dawn exhilarator thinks he's just warming up his motor. But, instead, he's getting it ready to rest in pieces.

The effect is the same as that of taking a horse out of the stable and beating it into a dead run for the first mile.

The steed would be heated up, all right—but it'd probably be dead, too.

A car's got to be started cautiously; like an owl approaching a taxidermist—very cautiously.

Therefore, the silence committee ought to direct its attention to the motorist who pulls the roar deal each a. m.

He should be made to give his oil a chance to get up and around, and his neighbors an opportunity to stay down and sleep a little longer.



Tall white pines mask the steep slopes of the northern section of Washington State.

imported from France, Blister Rust has crept down across the border to become one of the vital problems of the department of agriculture. So serious have been the ravages of this pest that a special division for Blister Rust control has been created by the department.

More than 2,176,000 acres of public and privately owned lands are known to be infected by Blister Rust. This area is embraced in Eastern Washington, Northern Idaho and Western Montana, the only section of the country where great stands of this timber are to be found.

Once the pest has attacked a white pine tree, it quickly spreads appearing as a fungus growth on the bark where it saps the life of the tree.

While the greatest devastation has been wrought in the forests of pine in the Northwest, Blister Rust has also been found and is spreading down through Southern Oregon and Northern California, and has been found as far south as the beautiful wooded slopes of the Salinas Valley.

Wherever the "five-needle pine" grows, there flourishes the wild currant and the gooseberry, hosts to the deadly Blister Rust. Included in this designation of "five-needle" is the white, the yellow and the sugar pine. Each yields to commerce that valuable light, white straight-grained wood so admirably suited to the manufacture of fruit crates. This is the wood that may be found at any grocery store or fruit stand when oranges, lemons or apples are being unpacked from their crates. No other lumber is so well suited to the making of "box shooks," as the slats and ends are designated by the trade, as this "five-needle pine."

THIS fungus disease does not spread from tree to tree. Spores, carried by the winds from long distances, settle on the leaves

of the currant or gooseberry bushes. There they develop on the foliage spotting it with light yellowish patches. By mid-summer and early fall these specks have become blotches of rust-brown color and it is ready to travel.

And now the deadly spores of the Blister Rust are carried to the tips of the pine needles on the light summer breezes. These spores then begin their journey down beneath the bark of the tree. Later they appear as a small fungus on the trunk and branches of the tree.

Only through the destruction of the wild currant and gooseberry can these last great stands of the white pine timber be saved. It is because of the rapidity with which the disease has spread that the Department of Agriculture has called for help. Once a tree has been infected its doom is sealed. Nothing can be done to save these trees, and soon other fine trees are added to the millions already standing rust-brown and dead among their living fellows.

"Privately owned lands, as well as those belonging to the Government, including the National Parks, are being stripped of the wild currant and gooseberry bushes without cost to the owners. No private agency could afford to do this work, and unless all the areas are cleared of the Blister Rust hosts, no advantage would be gained if only the public lands were cleared," Mr. Bradford said.

"Already hundreds of young men from the C. C. C. camps are at work uprooting bushes that harbor the pest. Other men are being added as rapidly as they may be hired and sent into the field. Portable camps are set up at strategic points. These are equipped with beds and bedding. Good food is provided for the men at a nominal cost," he continued.

"It is the aim of officials to send into the field a sufficient force to clear as large a part of the 430,000 acres as is possible

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