

# GARDENING TIPS

By DON BERRY  
County Extension Agent  
VELVET GRASS

Velvet grass, the most difficult weed grass in our lawns, shows more distinctly now than during most other seasons.

It appears as light green patches among the darker lawn grasses. Velvet grass is sometimes erroneously called crabgrass. The leaves of velvet grass are broad, green color, and covered with velvety fuzz. The plant has a prostrate spreading habit. Clumps of velvet grass often are a foot or more in diameter.

Velvet grass is difficult to control. Numerous herbicides have been tried, but few have been effective and none are practical at the present time.

The most practical control of velvet grass in lawns is to pull or dig it when it first shows up in the lawn. It becomes too numerous to pull or dig, the lawn should be broken up, prepared and reseeded.

Prior to seeding the soil should be worked frequently for a couple months or more. Frequent cultivation will kill the velvet grass plants and prevent their reestablishing.

Velvet grass readily invades poorly kept lawns. It tolerates summer drought, poor drainage, low fertility, and compacted soil better than do the desirable lawn grasses.

## CHERRY FRUIT TREES

Although flowering cherry trees are lovely signs of Oregon spring, they may have to be banned in some parts of the state because they carry a virus harmful to fruit-bearing cherry trees.

Dr. John A. Milbrath, Oregon State college plant pathologist, explained that the flowering cherries are completely unharmed by the virus. In fact, it takes extensive research to tell when they are infected. But the virus is easily given to fruit-bearing cherry trees and will eventually ruin them.

Since ornamental cherry trees are so popular, and since the virus doesn't damage the flowering tree, Milbrath's long-range research is aimed at developing a virus-resistant fruit-bearing tree, according to a story in the spring issue of the OSC agricultural experiment station magazine, "Oregon's Agricultural Progress."

Until resistant stock is developed, cherries should be removed from the vicinity of bearing orchards and from the neighborhood of nurseries where budwood is selected and stock propagated, Milbrath says.

An insect—probably a common leafhopper—seems to be to blame for transferring the virus from flowering to bearing trees.

Early stages of the disease on pie cherry trees are hard to identify, but severely infected trees have short, sparse foliage and little or no new growth. Fruit is the best indicator of severity of the disease. Trees recently infected may have late-ripening cherries somewhat smaller than normal, while trees in advanced stages of the disease bear orange-pink, irregularly-shaped, flat-tasting cherries about half normal size.

**Backyard Trapper**  
According to Andy S. Landforce, Oregon State college wildlife specialist, a good mole is a dead mole this time of year—especially if his pelt is tucked on a board.

When properly set a scissor-jaw trap is one of the most effective for catching the western mole. This trap takes the animal without damaging its pelt, and the set trap is safe from children and livestock.

Directions for use of the scissor-jaw trap are given in extension bulletin No. 629, titled "Controlling Rodents and Other Small Animal Pests in Oregon." Copies are available at county extension offices.

"A mound of soil emerging from a lawn, garden, or pasture is a sign that a mole is searching for food. The mole's main diet is worms and insects. His normal home paths are in holes 8 to 10 inches underground. However, moles forage for their food in looser soil, especially in flower beds, gardens, or well-managed pastures.

The young are usually born in April and May, and this is the time when most damage from moles appears. It's also the time when a mole trap can be most effective in preventing mole damage.

Pelts can be sold to any major fur dealer. The dense black fur is used for various fur garments.

Farmers' assets amount to \$203 billion, about equal to the value of all stocks listed on the New York Stock Exchange, says the USDA.

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BEDDING PLANTS

With the danger of frost pretty well over, home gardeners should try to get out their bedding plants as soon as possible. Now is a good time to put in peppers, tomatoes, egg plants, brussel sprouts, cabbage, etc.

Peppers and egg plants are easy to grow and, even if you have no garden, can be set out as a border along with flowers and used as ornamentals. They are quite decorative in small spaces and should be set about 18 inches apart. California Wonder Types are the best green peppers while Red Chile are still recommended for hot peppers. The Black Beauty egg plant is the best home garden variety.

Tomatoes should be gotten out as quickly as possible and may be grown either as individual plants on the wall or they can be planted in a home garden 3 feet by 3 feet and staked or pruned. When staking, it is best to set stakes with the plant. As stem grows, tie it to the stake at 8 inch intervals and remove all side shoots as they appear.

**Tomato Varieties**  
There are many tomato varieties. Burpees Early and Morses Early 408 are good early plants, while Ace and Big Boy are recommended as late varieties.

It should be remembered that most early blossoms break off at a swelling on the stem. This natural shedding occurs most years until the early morning temperatures stay above 50 degrees for several consecutive nights. Earlier setting can be encouraged through the use of hormones but fruit which is set by this method will often be seedless and misshapen.

With all bedding plants, a dip into a DDT solution before planting, using one heaping tablespoon of 50 per cent DDT in a gallon of water, aids in flea beetle control. Booster solutions using two heaping tablespoons of a complete fertilizer to a gallon of water, and a cupful applied to each transplant, is also beneficial.

## SOIL INSECTICIDE

Home owners who are having trouble with worms in radishes, turnips, potatoes, carrots, etc., might try a soil insecticide. Where vegetables have already been planted, drenching rows using two to three teaspoons of Aldrin emulsifiable concentrate (liquid) per gallon of water is generally beneficial. Recommended rate is one pint of this solution for each 23 feet of row.

It can be dipped along the rows from a tin can with a large nail hole punched in the bottom. Three applications timed ten days apart starting when the first true leaves are showing should be made.

If the garden was treated prior to planting with a dust or granule form of Aldrin, Chlordane or Dieldrin, the drenching treatment may not be necessary.

Soil treatment is easy and effective. Generally five pounds of 5 per cent dust or granules, or 10 pounds of 2 1/2 per cent granules per thousand feet mixed into the soil before planting is the recommended practice.

Onion root maggots are extremely difficult to control and here the best practice is to dust onions at ten-day intervals with DDT as soon as the onions emerge through the surface of the soil. This dusting must be continued throughout the season.

**Rhubarb Seed Stalks**  
A. A. Duncan, Oregon State college vegetable specialist, suggests you be on the lookout for seed stalk on rhubarb.

At the first sign of seed stalk development in rhubarb, cut the stalk off close to the plant; cutting the seed stalk causes less damage to the plant than pulling it off.

Early seed stalk development is usually more noticeable in old plantings and in fields of low fertility. Varieties also differ in seed stalk development.

Farmers should check their grain bins often as the weather gets warmer. High temperatures plus moisture in the grain spell fun and good living for the insect world, but trouble for farmers. A good solution, says South Dakota State College researchers, is drying the grain before storage.

Even with higher retail food prices, the average consumer this year can buy more food with income from an hour's work than at any time in the past 20 years, says the U. S. government.

Enough beef, pork, lamb and veal will be produced this year to provide 161.5 pounds per person in the United States, according to estimates by the United States Department of Agriculture.

# More, Better Filberts Aim Of OSC Study

Corvallis—More and better filberts are goals of Oregon State college horticulturists who have planted nearly 500 nut trees at the new filbert experimental plot near Wilsonville.

Although OSC has done filbert research on a limited scale for more than a quarter of a century, this is the first time the college has had its own test plot. Previous studies were made in private orchards.

Dr. S. B. Apple, head of the OSC horticulture department, pointed out that trials in the new plot will enable a comparison of different varieties under identical conditions. He hopes eventually to have 200 varieties and selections under study.

A \$1,600 grant from the Oregon Filbert Commission made it possible for the OSC filbert experimental plot to get under way.

Filbert varieties from all over the world will be planted and tested as first step toward an ultimate breeding program. The scientists hope to reduce percentage of blank (empty) nuts and find heavy-producing varieties with thin shells and plump kernels without rousing skin. They hope to overcome hardiness and pollination difficulties.

Dr. Quentin Zielinski, OSC horticulturist in charge of crop production varies Oregon filbert producers, who grow about 90 per cent of the nation's filberts, have been plagued by a heavy crop one year followed by a short crop the next. The horticulturists hope to find ways of overcoming this condition.

John H. Painter, USDA horticulturist at OSC, has done some preliminary work on this problem by systematic pruning to keep trees in a constant state of vigor.

Painter has some spacing tests at the Wilsonville site to establish the best initial spacing of trees for future pruning studies, and to show how much production increase may be expected with the different planting distances.

In another project, bush type trees will be tested against normal tree types. In some nut crops, the bush type has proven more productive than the tree type, Painter explained. The 24-acre experimental plot, leased to OSC by the state board of control for \$1 a year, is on the Dammasch state hospital grounds.

**Moth Imported For Trial as Weed Control**

Corvallis — A French moth with an appetite for an Oregon weed has been imported in an experimental effort to control the weed, tansy ragwort. The weed is poisonous to cattle and horses, and is a vigorous grower, crowding out more desirable plants.

Jackson county doesn't have this weed problem. The Oregon State college entomology department released nearly 1,000 adult cinnabar moths this month in cooperation with county extension agents in Linn and Polk counties.

Dr. P. O. Ritcher, head of entomology at OSC, and Robert W. Every, extension entomologist, emphasized that the project is purely experimental. At present, there's no way to know how effective the insect will be in controlling the weed, they said. And it will take several years for the cinnabar moth population to become established in Oregon.

**Native of France**  
The strikingly beautiful red and black moth is a native of France, where U. S. Department of Agriculture entomologists found it to be a natural enemy of tansy ragwort with no liking for any useful plants.

The insects were flown by jet from the USDA's entomology research laboratories in New Jersey. Some of the Oregon shipment was kept in the OSC greenhouse to lay their tiny yellow eggs on tansy ragwort plants. Most of the moths were released in patches of tansy ragwort on farms near Valley Junction and Lyons.

California, Washington and Oregon all have heavy infestations of tansy ragwort. The weed is aggressively spreading over more land each year. Chemicals control it, but areas of infestation are so great, and in many cases so inaccessible, that spraying is economically unfeasible.

California got a shipment of cinnabar moth larvae for release last year, but the May shipment to Oregon was the first for this state.

Rotation-grazed pastures may yield three times as much grazing per acre as continuously grazed pastures, says Purdue University.

# Farm Notes

Washington—The agricultural department predicted that producers of eggs, broilers, and probably turkeys will do better financially this year than in 1959.

Farmers' gross income from poultry enterprises in 1959 was down to the lowest level since 1944, according to department economists writing in the publication, "The Poultry and Egg Situation." At \$3,100,000,000, the 1959 combined value of sales plus home consumption of eggs, farm chickens, broilers, turkeys, and other poultry was 12 per cent lower than in 1958.

The Agricultural Department has predicted a further seasonal increase in the price of hogs. Since December, live hog prices have gone up about \$4 per hundredweight. The department said that by mid-summer, marketings will be considerably below a year earlier and will stay below the rest of 1960. Prices during this period are likely to average substantially higher.

Cattle slaughter through 1960 probably will continue since 1959, the department said. Production, however, will continue to exceed slaughter. Numbers are likely to increase again this year, but probably at a rate slower than last year's 4,900,000 head.

The crop reporting board said a 1 per cent increase over last year's planted acreage of nine processing vegetable crops was indicated for 1960. Increases in 1960 over 1959 acreage: Green lima beans, 15 per cent; snap beans, 6 per cent; beets for canning, 7 per cent; cabbage for kraut, 14 per cent; and green peas, 2 per cent.

These larger acreages were nearly offset by declines in sweet corn and cucumbers for pickles, each off 3 per cent; combined winter and early spring spinach, 7 per cent; and tomatoes, 1 per cent. The changes indicated for all crops except green peas and spinach were based on processors' intentions before planting time.

The FAS said one of the most significant developments in livestock production continues to be the emphasis being given by most Communist bloc countries to producing faster-maturing animals, one type of which is sheep, in their drive to increase meat production. The FAS said the slow increase in world numbers partly reflects the relatively low world wool prices in 1958 and early 1959.

Russia, Red China and Eastern Europe provided more than 80 per cent of the world increase in sheep numbers during 1959, and about half of the world gain from the 1951-55 average. These gains, mostly in the Soviet Union, resulted mainly from the special government emphasis and encouragement to all phases of sheep production, particularly better pastures and breed improvement.

Washington—Red grapefruit juice in its natural color soon may be on the way to the canned goods section in grocery stores.

The Agricultural Research Service (ARS) has developed a method for producing naturally colored single-strength canned juice from red grapefruit. In the process, some of the color-bearing pulp normally removed is finely ground and added back to the juice.

Before the product becomes available to the general public a processing firm must pick up the patent from ARS and begin producing it commercially.

The agriculture department said the pulp-fortified juice does not develop the objectionable muddiness or browning characteristic of juice made by conventional methods. The product also has a higher pro-vitamin A content. ARS said this is carotene, a substance the human body can convert into vitamin A.

Interior Secretary Fred A. Seaton has suggested a new use for the government's surplus grain. He called for legislation authorizing use of surplus grain by state fish and game departments for emergency feeding of resident game birds and other wildlife threatened with starvation.

Under the proposed legislation, the Commodity Credit Corp. would furnish the grain free, with state paying the cost of transportation and packaging of the grain.

A study by the Illinois dairy herd improvement association shows that 10 cows averaging 10,239 pounds of milk a year can give the same return over feed costs as 34 cows producing an average of 5,311 pounds.

The study showed that high producers eat more feed than low producers but, as a cow's production increases, feed costs rise at a slower rate than returns above feed costs.

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# Soviet Attitude Blamed On Agricultural Problems

By GAYLORD P. GODWIN  
United Press International  
Washington—In the fall of 1959, a Soviet agricultural newspaper published an article entitled, "You can be sure, Mr. Benson, we will catch up and surpass you."

The article was published about the time Agriculture Secretary Ezra T. Benson completed a trip to the Soviet Union. It referred to Russian efforts to produce the United States agriculturally.

Trying to make good on the headline boast may be one of the reasons Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev threw a monkey wrench into the opening session of the summit conference at Paris Monday. It may be that Khrushchev was trying to divert attention of the Russian people from a pressing home problem—Agriculture.

**New Farm Area**  
Since 1953, Russia has expanded her cultivated areas by almost 100 million acres. To do this Soviet farmers plowed up arid and semiarid land, plus millions of acres covered with grass. Much of this plowing was done in Kazakhstan which was to become a companion "breadbasket" to the rich Ukraine and Crimea areas. Apparently the idea was that with new acres in cultivation, all Russian farmers had to do was plant their seeds, cultivate the land, and harvest bountiful crops, weather permitting.

The anticipated bumper crops would give Soviet leaders an opportunity to tell the world that Mother Russia could feed her own millions and those of satellite countries, and out-produce the capitalist United States.

The Russian leaders may have reckoned without the weather. For example, wind and dust storms. On April 13, a Russian newspaper in the Ukraine said dust storms there were "very severe—the worst ever." The newspaper said "crops have simply been blown out" by terrific winds. The spring was referred to as "very trying." Farmers, the newspaper said, have been hard put to get their seeding done. Similar storms were reported in the Crimea.

**Last Harvest Poor**  
Last December Khrushchev disclosed that the 1959 Soviet harvest was the worst in four years. He blamed the weather and "leaders who do not understand a thing about agriculture." He centered his attack on the failure of the leaders to come up with a good harvest in Kazakhstan, where much new land had been opened to cultivation—and

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to considerable wind erosion. A U.S. agriculture department official said that in 1957, some 400,000 hectares (988,400 acres) in Kazakhstan had suffered severely from wind erosion. Foreign agricultural analysts, basing their reasoning on that information and adding Khrushchev's own words to it, are not sure the situation has improved much, if any.

It could be that Khrushchev has heard loud mutterings about adverse agricultural conditions in his own country—and consequently used the summit conference as a vehicle to divert his countrymen's attention from their internal difficulties.

