

AROUND THE FARM BY DON COIN WALROD County Extension Agent

Fred Zimmerman, Agriary, is approaching an ultimate in conservation farming with a planting of strawberries going in on the out-sour. The planting is only a small one, but it is on a rather steep field below his house that would surely erode if it were not planted on the contour.

We watched the planting of this field last week while putting on some experimental weed control plots on Fred's farm. Fred was using a small tractor and a planter and the whole operation was going on rapidly and smoothly.

Taber outgrass is a weedy type grass that is even more of a pest than the well-known quack grass. This grass, which is located in several areas of the county, is most serious when it infests the strawberry and caneberry fields. The grass is almost identical in appearance to the common tall oatgrass, but at the same height, it reproduces from a bulblike underground growth, as well as seed. These "bulbs" are actually stems which grow in dense clusters, each one growing from the top of the one below. The "bulbs" are flattened and grow in strings that resemble rattles of the rattlesnake.

Calibration has been the best means of control to date and is usually used in conjunction with an annual hay crop. If the stems of infestation are small, digging out the roots and bulbs by hand or treating repeatedly with soil sterilants has been somewhat effective.

New weed control chemicals being developed offer some promise of giving control, but how effective they will be can be determined only by actual trials. Some of the chemicals that might be effective are dalapon, TCA, ATZ, "Karmex" FW. The older IPC and chlorates might still

have a place in the control program, although the chlorates have very undesirable effects on the soil. Not only will the effectiveness of these materials need to be determined, but also the rates at which they will need to be applied will have to be checked.

All of the above listed materials were applied at varying rates on twenty different plots, each a rod square, last week. The plots, located at Fred Zimmerman's, had stands of the tuber outgrass ranging from an estimated 40 to 80 per cent.

Feeding the home lawn will give that good desirable green color that everyone wants and at the same time increase the vigor of the grass so that it can better withstand the wear and tear of summer use. If the lawn was not fertilized during March or April, 4 to 8 pounds of ammonium sulfate or 4 to 5 pounds of ammonium nitrate per thousand square feet will help to develop a healthy vigorous turf. If the lawn is still not showing the good color and growth you want by the middle of June, another application at half the above rates would be worthwhile.

Now is a good time to get the jump on those lawn weeds, too. Most of the common lawn weeds will be controlled by 1, 4-D. This material is non-poisonous to animals and humans, is noncorrosive and nonflammable. However, it is important that it be used properly to avoid damage to flowers, vegetables and shrubs. The amine form of 1, 4-D is recommended. While the ester form may kill weeds faster, there is more danger to other plants from drifting fumes. It is important that the proper amount of material be applied, but there are many different products on the market and they vary in strength. Our suggestion is that directions on the container be followed or one-half ounce of parent acid of 1, 4-D be used on each 1000 square feet of lawn area.

It is important that the sprayer not be used for any other purpose until it has been thoroughly cleaned. It is best to have two sprayers and use one for weed work only, as hormone materials such as 1, 4-D do not clean out too readily. Hot water and soap, soda, or household ammonia help to clean a sprayer.

Often at this time of year we have calls from someone wanting to know if we can tell them of a commercial spray operator or someone who will do a little spraying on the side. Unfortunately, we do not know of anyone doing custom work, although there seems to be a great deal of need for this service. While Columbia county has a number of good sized orchards, many of the folks have plantings too small to justify equipment, and still spraying is necessary. We would appreciate having the names of anyone who does even a small amount of outside spraying.

In 1953, 38,500 Americans were killed in traffic accidents.

Pruning Demonstration At Fairgrounds Saturday

Forestry 4-H club members in Columbia county will take part in setting up a pruning demonstration at the county fairgrounds on Saturday, May 8, states Harold Black, 4-H extension agent. Work will begin at 9:00 a.m.

A stand of 15 to 20 year old Douglas fir will be pruned to show the effects of pruning on forestry trees. Part of the stand was pruned in 1953.

The work is under the direction of the county forestry planning committee. The area in which the pruning demonstration is being set up is located next to the Timber Harvest Plot which has attracted national recognition. Those attending will have an opportunity to see this plot.

Ice cream, coffee and cold drinks will be furnished if room to all those who are present. Those attending should bring their own lunches.

Walnut Blight Control Spray Application Due

The first walnut blight control spray was due May 2 in orchards located on the Valley Floor according to information just received from Dr. Paul Miller, USDA Pathologist at Oregon State College, reports County Agent, Don Coin Walrod.

Columbia County walnut growers will probably find that the sprays are due on to 4 days later here, although it will depend somewhat on the locality. Each grower can determine the exact time for control applications in his orchard by comparing bud development with illustrations in Extension Circular 482, "The Control of Walnut Blight in the Pacific Northwest."

Either sprays or dusts may be used in the blight control program, says Walrod, spray fungicides recommended include Bordeaux 4-2-100, yellow cuprodate at the rate of one pound to 100 gallons of water plus one ounce of spreader-sticker.

Walnut growers who have their names on file with the county extension office have all received a letter listing the materials to use in both dust and spray programs, as well as the timing of sprays. Anyone wishing additional information on blight control measures is invited to contact the County Agent.

Strawberry Aphid Requires Dusting

Strawberry growers who plan to carry out an aphid control program should plan to make the first insecticide application this week, advises Don Coin Walrod, County Extension Agent.

Strawberry growers in Clackamas and Multnomah counties were advised to make the first insecticide application a week ago following surveys by the Extension Agents of each county and Oregon State College Entomologists, Robert Every and Clark Amen. Generally recommendations have been that insecticides be applied at the time marsh strawberries begin to bloom.

Strawberry aphids are the only known vector for the transmission of strawberry virus diseases. To prevent increases in these diseases, it is important that the insects be controlled. Prevention of the disease is also accomplished by the use of certified plants and by roguing out and destroying diseased plants.

The strawberry aphid is controlled by applying a one per cent dust of either parathion or TEPP. On mature fields, 40 or more pounds of dust applied with a hooded power duster is recommended. Dustings need to be repeated every two weeks, but no application of parathion should be made closer than two weeks before harvest.

'53 Farm Income Down Slightly

Gross income to Columbia county farmers dropped slightly below the 1952 level but was still more than four and three quarters millions of dollars. Considering that Columbia county has a rather small proportion of its total land area devoted to actual farming, this is a rather sizable income. The information was released recently by Don Coin Walrod, county farm agent.

On the basis of the two thousand farms listed by the census for the county, this would mean an average gross income of about \$2340 per farm. However, averages do not always tell a true story. Columbia county leads the state in the number of part-time and residential farms with 61 per cent falling in this classification.

According to census definition the income of these part-time farms cannot exceed \$1190 and the operator works off the farm for at least 90 days per year. Residential farms have less than \$230 of income per year. Consequently, the gross income of our five to six hundred commercial farms is probably considerably higher than the average of \$2340.

It is important to note that these gross figures are no indication whatever of the net returns to the farmer. For the past few years the gross return of the farmers has been on a steady downward trend. At the same time his costs of production have gone steadily upward with increased costs of equipment, higher taxes, greater labor costs and higher prices for nearly all other goods and services. These two factors together have resulted in decreasing net income for almost all farmers.

Orchardists Advised to Turn Cover Crops Now

As a soil conserving measure, orchardists who still have standing cover crops will want to get them diced under as soon as possible, advises County Agent, Don Coin Walrod.

While cover crops are soil building, if left too long they help to deplete the soil moisture that would otherwise be used by the fruit and nut trees for the development of the crop.

A recent statement by John Painter, USDA horticulturist, at OSC emphasizes the need for dicing under cover crops. Referring to the Willamette Valley area Painter said: "The thirty-day weather outlook is for higher than normal temperatures and lower than normal rainfall."

"With the prospects of a heavy crop of both walnuts and filberts this year, it is highly important that the growers turn under their cover crops immediately if they have not already done so. Conservation of moisture is going to be extremely important this year."

Three out of four traffic accidents happen in clear weather on dry roads.

Fire Protection Needed on Farm

If fire should attack your farm today, are you prepared to fight it efficiently until the fire department can arrive? Do you know how to call the fire department, and how to direct it to the scene of the fire quickly and accurately? Do you have a ladder that will let you fight a fire on the highest roof? Are your roofs protected with asphalt shingles or some other fire-resistant roofing? Have you recently inspected and re-charged your fire extinguishers?

The National Fire Protection Association says that almost all farm fires can be prevented, but that farmers, after fire removal from organized fire protection, must look to their own defenses to control and hold a fire in check when it does occur.

The County Extension Agent, Don Coin Walrod, urges farmers to check their fire defenses now,

to be sure they can act swiftly and effectively. Minimum fire-fighting equipment for every farm includes:

1. An adequate supply of water available for the use of fire trucks and portable pumps.
2. Approved fire extinguishers conveniently placed near all hazardous locations, such as the barn, machine shed, and storage tanks of gasoline and kerosene. Ask the fire department to be sure you have the right type of extinguisher to fight the kinds of fire you are most likely to have. Recharge extinguishers yearly where required.
3. Enough garden hose and a filled water bucket for each 400 or 500 square feet of building.
4. Ladders long enough for rescue purposes and to reach the highest flammable roof top.
5. A back-pack pump and fire swatter, wet brooms or wet burlap bags to fight field fires.

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