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New Mexico body elects Serna

The New Mexico Turfgrass Association recently elected Julian A. Serna of Albuquerque president; Duane Walker of Albuquerque, vice president, and C. E. Watson of New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, secretary.

The election highlighted a two-day event. The program included tours of the University of New Mexico golf course where a new hydro-seeder was demonstrated and the Sandia military base where Russian olive trees have been used successfully with minimum care for the trees.

Gordon Watts, head of the department of botany and entomology at New Mexico State U., reported that the frit fly, an insect that has been known in the U. S. for years, recently attacked grasses at golf courses at University Park and El Paso. So far, he said, it has not been reported as a problem in northern New Mexico.

The tiny insect, about the size of a common fruit fly, or smaller, has been a problem to European farmers for many years, but so far it has not attacked crops in the U. S.

Watts suggested that resistance to the frit fly has been bred out of the grasses used for turf and added that a mutation may have occurred in the insect. But he stressed that these are only speculations without scientific proof.

Since the frit fly can travel great distances, local control measures would have only brief effect because the grasses could become reinfected from migrations. Watts said that the use of a safe insecticide such as malathion might be used as a stop-gap.

Charles E. Cypert, Plainview, Tex., area representative for Geigy Chemical Company, urged basic education in pesticide usage as a means of assuring continued control explorations.

"The development of resistant crop pests must be countered by continuing development of chemical and biological controls," he said. "The research incentive for new pesticides must not be discouraged by restrictive legislation."