"Let's Go National," Delegates Urge at Florida Spraymen's 3rd Annual Meeting

If 1963 really brings the "coming of age" of contract spraying, as has been predicted, an energetic organization in Florida may be one of the reasons.

Meeting at Miami Beach's Deauville Hotel, Nov. 8-10, nearly 200 delegates to the third annual Horticultural Spraymen's Association of Florida convention made some momentous decisions, and heard predictions which touch on the very future of the industry.

In a series of packed sessions they:

(1) voted to concentrate on becoming a national association;

(2) met with state health officials to plan forthcoming legislation which will enhance the professional status of Florida's 900-plus spraymen;

(3) heard top-echelon scientists enlarge the group's understanding of basic technical problems; and

(4) held panel discussions,

Post-lecture confidences were exchanged by economist Dr. Grover A. J. Noetzel (left) and veteran sprayman Charlie Johnson.

elected officers, and still found time to frolic in the South Atlantic sun and engage in a sumptuous social program.

To top it all off, several speakers dwelt on the current antipesticide issue, and advised contract applicators to put this new public demand for skilled application to work for the industry.

Need for National Assn. Cited

HSAF already has members from as far away as New York and Puerto Rico, and has had inquiries about the organization from such diverse spots as Texas and Ohio. This year, delegates actually travelled from as far away as North Carolina to join in the education and fun.

Family affair. Registration was handled by this able trio (left to right) Cindy, Barbara, and Harvey Mast who, with cousin Roger, help run Masts' Complete Lawn Service in Lake Worth. Elberta Newell, Tom Hamall's able publicity assistant, was one of the first to register.

Sensing the need for some kind of national unity in the thriving weed control and turf spraying business, the hard-working members laid their plans on the board.

"Let's go national," they said.

They also voted to invite *Weeds and Turf* to act as the group's official news outlet.

This significant decision to go national followed on the heels of a no-holds-barred address from John A. Mulrennan of the Florida State Board of Health.

Mulrennan says that however much our free-enterprise instincts may revolt against legislation, our civilized notions make us realize that certain rules are necessary.

It is Mulrennan's intention to draw up legislation which will spur Florida spraymen to even greater concepts of professionalism.

"There is no group of professional people I know of which has made the progress this group has made in the last three years," Mulrennan said to his enthusiastic audience.

Another member of the Florida Board, entomologist Frank Wilson, addressed the group Friday on how to determine quality of emulsifiable concentrates, formulations so vital to the sprayman's interest.

In emulsifiable concentrates, the formulation should consist of globules as small as possible, Wilson said, and the mixture should remain stable. There are several ways to test quality of these emulsifiable concentrate formulations.

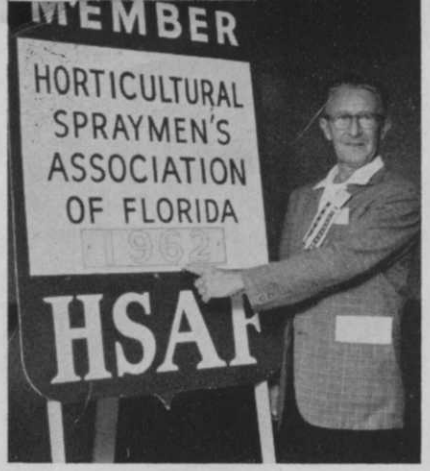
One such test is the "settling" test, in which one tablespoon of concentrate is mixed in a pint of water, and placed in a water-tight jar. This jar is then shaken 10 times.

Then duplicate the procedure for the chemicals to be compared for quality of formulation. Set the jars side by side, and watch for visible settling or layering at 5, 10, 15, and 30-minute intervals.

Any material which shows layering or settling within 5 minutes should be considered unsatisfactory, the scientist maintains.

Another easy check is simply

In deep thought, Florida health official John A. Mulrennan (left) studied pending spraymen's legislation with HSAF president Larry Nipp.



Proud of the past year, hopeful for the new is HSAF's energetic publicity director Tom Hamall.

to compare globule size of various compounds under the microscopes which spraymen are buying in increasing number.

Smaller the globule, better the product, Wilson claims.

Willson Man Rates Rachel

Back for the second time at HSAF conventions, William J. Wiswesser, Director of Industrial Hygiene for Willson Products, joined in the discussion of the new uproar about chemicals and their importance.

Wiswesser's friendly, easy delivery did not detract from the importance of what he had to say.

People who capitalize on public gullibility for pseudo-scientific facts, especially when motivated by profit, are "intellectually dishonest," Wiswesser said forcefully.

He cited industry safety records, and recommended that spraymen be properly masked when delivering toxic sprays and dusts.

Make Money, Economist Urges

There's no shame connected with making profit, although the way some people run their small businesses you'd think they're afraid to be in the black, Dr. Grover A. J. Noetzel, Dean of the Department of Economics, University of Miami, told HSAF conventioneers. Dr. Noetzel, a world-renowned industrial consultant and business advisor, delivered some "equations for small business" which should help contract applicators make more money.

Our entire free enterprise system is based on the profit motive, and there's no reason to feel altruistic about it.

Dean Noetzel told spraymen to examine their accounts closely, single out which ones are losing money, and get rid of them, regardless of other factors. These revenue-sappers have to go. He hinted that they might be referred to competitors, but his tone was in jest.

Noetzel suggested holding down the rate of expansion, because small businesses can sometimes grow too fast for their own good. He recommended CAs stay away from high-cost financing.

Mainstays in HSAF's operations are these three charter members (left to right) Bill King, Ted Kaplan, and Dan Van Volkenberg.

Chinch Bugs Outwit Science

"Bugs are winning the war with mankind, and they're still winning the war with plants."

This challenging opener from Dr. Roy A. Bair, agricultural consultant from West Palm Beach, was a fitting attention-getter for the assembled spraymen, many of whom had been perplexed by mounting public criticism of pesticides.

In his evaluation of lawn grasses, the Palm Beach expert said researchers are far from developing the "perfect" lawn grass which would be resistant to insects, disease, and weed infestations.

But while man hasn't outwitted these turfgrass scourges, insects like the chinch bug have progressed in their adaptation to spraymen's efforts to destroy them.

"Bitter Blue St. Augustine grass got its name because chinch bugs supposedly wouldn't touch it because of its bitter taste," Dr. Bair observed, "but in time the insects developed a strain which relished the new grass."

Similarly, resistance to DDT and parathion cropped up time and time again among the prolific chinch bugs, now reported to be moving into the North and Midwest.

In a nutshell, this means contract applicators have to keep up to date on all the new weapons industry and research now offer, if insects, diseases, and weeds are to be controlled.

"Professional spraymen must become conversant with all aspects of varietal adaptability and requirements of grasses for specific soil types, watering procedures, fertilizing, mowing, and renovating," Dr. Bair concluded.

A fiery rebuttal of irresponsible antipesticide books was delivered by agricultural consultant Dr. Roy A. Bair (left), who stopped to compare notes with entomologist James Brogdon.

More Chinch Bug Data

Some writers say the chinch bug spurred Florida spraymen in their unique growth to a $25,000,000 industry, and Florida Extension Service Entomologist James E. Brogdon dwelt at length on this famous lawn devastator.

While new, unconventional control methods have been directed against the chinch bug in Florida, Brogdon said, few of the new techniques show promise.

Chemosterilization, control with a fungus, and introduction of certain nematodes have all failed to significantly reduce chinch bug populations.

Chemical control, in the final analysis, is still the bulwark of the CA's attack on chinch bugs. Materials now commonly used include Trithion, Ethion, VC-13, and Diazinon, Brogdon commented. Parathion was once a favorite, but this relatively hazardous chemical is losing favor among some applicators.

Studies made this year indicate several chemicals not now used on the grass-hungry insects may

prove effective weapons. Brogdon cited ASP-51 and Zytron as chemicals offering "excellent control at 10 lbs. active ingredient per acre." Dow Chemical, manufacturer of Zytron, has not registered its product for chinch bugs, Brogdon pointed out, but interest in this registration is indicated.

Five other experimental materials were tried, and found very promising, Brogdon said. These products, still in the testing stage, are Bayer 39007, Shell SD-7438, Stauffer N-2788, American Cyanamid 47300, and Ortho 5305.

Brogdon also recommended products for other lawn insects. Sod webworms and armyworms have been satisfactorily controlled with toxaphene and Sevin, he revealed.

Ethion has also been a good control for these lawn caterpillars.

Sevin, Toxaphene for Sod Webworms

For sod webworms specifically, Brogdon suggested 3 lbs. of 40% toxaphene wettable powder or 1½ pints of 60-65% toxaphene emulsi-

Looking at *Weeds and Turf* after delegates voted to make it HSAF's official news outlet were Lewis Maxwell (left) and sprayman Bill Murray, vice president of the group.

fiable concentrate, or 2 lbs. of 85% Sevin Sprayable (3½ lbs. of Sevin 50W) per 100 gallons of water.

Turf should be wet thoroughly, using at least 5 gallons of spray per 1000 sq. ft.

Mole crickets can be combatted with aldrin or heptachlor at about 4 lbs. active per acre, or chlordane at 10 lbs. active per acre.

Aldrin, heptachlor, or chlordane were also recommended for control of white grubs.

For millipedes, Brogdon concluded, we've suggested Diazinon or Sevin, as well as BHC or lindane.

As contract lawn spraying comes more and more into its own, and takes its rightful place among America's major service industries. applicators in increasing number are helping experiment stations with research projects.

Microscopes, Labs for Testing

Armed with microscopes, small laboratories, and test plots, these progressive firms are contributing significant experimental data to fulltime turfgrass researchers.

But all too often, data so gathered is not useful because haphazard experimental techniques are employed.

How to avoid this waste of important information was the subject of Dr. Stratton H. Kerr from the Florida Agricultural Experiment Station in Gainesville.

Dr. Kerr has some simple steps which CAs can take to insure a uniformity in experimental approaches. He outlined these steps as follows:

(1) In test plots, use side by side treatments as much as possible. When chemicals are compared on widely separate turf areas, variables of undetermined nature can cause different results, so that no real, valid comparison of chemicals is possible.

(2) When comparing one pesticide with another, run the tests several times. Dr. Kerr recommends a minimum of four lawns be tried before results can be evaluated seriously.

(3) Get an accurate estimate of which insects are present, and how many are there. Counts should be taken at 2-, 4-, and 6-week intervals.

(4) CAs should be sure to keep a thorough record of the entire test procedure, which includes dates of application, dosages used, weather conditions, and other variables.

If these simple steps are followed, Dr. Kerr predicted, spraymen can contribute significantly to the quest for new and better pesticides. Frequently the CA can offer more valid data because he has applied chemicals on a commercial basis under conditions which spraymen face in day-to-day jobs.

CAs have to be specialists in diverse fields, even to controlling lawn diseases, so Thursday's ad-

Popular speakers at the '62 convention were Dr. R. S. Mullin, plant pathologist (left), and nematologist Dr. James Winchester (center), who paused to talk with panel moderator Ralph White, president of the Fla. Turfgrass Assn.

dress by Dr. R. S. Mullin, Extension Plant Pathologist at the University of Florida, Gainesville, was a welcome one.

Turfgrass disease control is too complex a subject to be covered completely in a single address, or even in a single article like *Weeds and Turf*'s recent feature on these grass destroyers (November, W-1).

But Dr. Mullin distilled his facts, and presented the delegation a heady brew which is sure to upgrade their professional knowledge.

Spray Fungicides Under Leaves

One important thing, which is relatively simple and frequently overlooked, is adequate coverage when using a fungicide. Dr. Mullin said to be sure to cover the entire plant, including undersides of leaves, which may be particularly vulnerable to disease infection.

Dr. Mullin cited a new influx of roses into Florida, and cautioned CAs to beware of black spot and leaf spot which may attack these time-honored blooms. Eventually, CAs will get more and more calls

Exchange of ideas come from this trio with mixed backgrounds (left to right), Frank Wilson, whose special field is applied entomology, Pierre Nobs, Florida sprayman, and W. J. Wiswesser, chemist and safety expert from Willson Products.

Congratulations! Walter Ferguson, new HSAF president, was warmly rewarded on his election by wife Shirley.

to control diseases on ornamental plants such as these. For black spot and leaf spot, Dr. Mullin recommends Thaltan.

Nematodes, Eyeless Creatures, Abound in Countless Numbers

From the Florida Everglades Experiment Station, nematologist James Winchester brought a valuable dossier on nematode control.

Nematodes are eyeless creatures which are selective in feeding, sticking with a single host, or type of host, even from generation to generation.

They're much too small to be seen with the naked eye, but a Mr. Magoo will readily detect the damage these sightless scourges wreak.

Dr. Winchester dwelt on several species of particular concern to spraymen.

One of these is the sting nematode, which has been controlled with Nemagon, using 1 pt. per 700 square feet.

Fumazon and VC-13 are also good nematocides, it was said.

More Nematology

Florida spraymen are sufficiently worried about the nematode to devote two separate sessions on the program to this elusive, mysterious pest. Dr. A. A. DiEdwardo, University of Florida Experiment Station nematologist, presented a series of color slides, and elaborated on the information Dr. Winchester had just delivered.

DiEdwardo is particularly concerned with a new species of cyst nematode which attacks turf grasses with drastic results. The tiny pest causes a reduction in root systems so that the plants don't get enough iron.

In this case, he said, treating with an iron chelate is highly successful.

This year's technical program was rounded out by a general talk on ornamental maintenance by Charles Tucker, technical consultant of the General Spray Service, Inc., Katonah, N.Y.

Most homeowners don't understand how to water lawns, and they handle fertilizer in a fashion which can be described at best as haphazard, the young scientist quipped.

This simply means more business for the contract applicator in the future.

Panel of Pros

Perhaps the most popular feature of the Floridians' superbly planned convention was a question and answer period at the end of each day's events.

Speakers from the day's program were lined up before their audience, and members were invited to fire away on what needs to be known.

Questions from the floor were directed at Dr. Stratton Kerr who told delegates how to conduct test plots of turfgrass.

Questions came fast and furious.

Check Nematodes on Jobsite?

What on-job inspection can we use to determine whether nematode infestations are causing trouble? one delegate wanted to know.

Dr. DiEdwardo replied it is difficult to check these things in the field, but recommended CAs treat a small test plot with a nematocide. If the lawn ailment clears up, it's safe to go ahead and treat the rest of the defective sod.

"Do you get good control of turf diseases with one application of Velsicol's Emmi?" a sprayman asked. Dr. T. E. Freeman, plant pathologist at the University of Florida, replied that sometimes one dose will do if the disease is not too advanced, but he usually recommends two, spread 14 days apart.

This practical question-and-answer period was moderated with zest by Ralph White, Technical Director of Ousley Sod Co., Pompano Beach. White is president of the Florida Turfgrass Association.

The fact-finding panel made a fitting close to the lecture series, and lead the energetic conclave into their business meeting, during which they elected new officers and heard committee reports.

Ferguson New Prexy

Delegates moved Walter E. Ferguson into the top Florida post. Ferguson, who runs Ferguson Lawn Service in Winter Haven, will be a key man in the group's efforts at nationalization.

Under present organization, there are three regional vice presidents. William Murray, of Greenlawn Spray Service, Lake Worth, is new vice president for the Central Region. Representing the Northern Region will be William King of King Landscaping, Orlando. Alan Morgan, Hill and Harris Power Spraying, Ft. Lauderdale, will be vice president for the Southern Region.

New Directors at Large are Thomas Hamall, Bow Arrow Gardens, Miami, and Daniel Van Volkenberg, Lawns, Inc., St. Petersburg.

Next year the group will meet in Orlando, State Publicity Director Thomas Hamall told *Weeds and Turf*. Dates and specific spot will be announced later. Anyone wanting more information about the convention or HSAF plans to go national may write Hamall at 3291 N. W. 103rd St., Miami, Fla.

Convention success was attributed by retiring president Larry Nipp to Lucy Renault, program chairman.