

Outdoor Market Ripe

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of job should cost about \$164, leaving a gross profit of \$336. Not included of course are depreciation, administrative expenses, etc.

On the other hand, most termite operators normally expect to produce an average of \$150 per day per 2-man crew, with material cost approximately 10% of the total job. Using the same 2-day basis, the termite crew would produce \$300. With labor cost at \$64 and materials at \$30, gross profit is \$206, compared with \$336 for the weed job.

Termite control is much further advanced; there is presently more repeat work; control procedures have been more or less standardized, and results, in most cases, are fairly well predetermined. Conversely, weed control is in its infancy, and industrial plants, railways, and other prospects have not all been sold yet on the fact that they should pay a sustaining fee to get results which may be more difficult to come by.

It's apparent then that weed controllers should expect more money per unit of work-time, and more gross profit above materials and labor than is realized in structural pest control. It is especially important for an operator just beginning this service to record his material and labor costs accurately, and to compare these with his total volume to make sure labor and material expenses are running well under 40% of total volume.

Seasonal Variations

In some areas, addition of weed control and turf spraying helps



Redd's operations also include a complete lawn maintenance program. To supplement his contract spraying, the Mississippian offers lawn chemicals and tools for resale.

level out seasonal fluctuations in business volume where a firm does both vegetation work and general pest control. Unfortunately, though, in the South, peaks of each activity coincide closely.

In Mississippi, for example, weed control begins in February and continues at peak through May. This is exactly the time when the heaviest concentration of termite activity is experienced.

Turf pest control, on the other hand, begins in late April and runs through September, reaching its peak in July and August. This also coincides very closely with the peaks of general pest control services.

With new developments in soil sterilization, pre-emergence sprayings, and year-round treatments becoming more and more common in industrial applications, it is hoped the changes in business cycles will be lessened.

Possibly the biggest potential, so far as size of individual accounts, is industrial weed control, although some turf work, such as contract golf course spraying, nets large amounts.

Potential Volume

A town of 2,000 should have at least 30 varying types of business establishments which could use some kind of weed control. Each account should be worth an average minimum of \$50, or a total of \$1500 for the town. On this basis, potential in weed control in an urban area should be 75¢ per capita yearly. In areas with more than 10,000 people, the potential is probably 50¢ per capita per year, because the number of business establishments per person generally goes down as population goes up.

Using this formula, a town of 10,000 should bring in \$5,000 in weed control accounts yearly, and a city of 50,000 would bring in \$25,000. This does not include parks, railways, or highways.

As population rises above 100,000, other elements prevent using this system of calculation.

Here are only a few immediate prospects for the PCO turned weed controller: parking lots, drive-ins, theatres, junk yards, fence rows, lumber yards, storage areas, perimeters of buildings, paper mills,

Meeting Dates



Hyacinth Control Society First Annual Meeting, Governor's Club Hotel, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., July 8-11.

U. S. Department of Agriculture Field Day Review of Weed Control, Plant Industry Station, Beltsville, Md., July 11-12.

Cornell Weed Day, New York State College of Agriculture, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y., July 17-18.

International Shade Tree Conference 38th Annual Convention, Jack Tar Hotel, San Francisco, Calif., August 5-10.

National Arborists Association Meeting, in conjunction with International Shade Tree Conference above.

American Society of Plant Physiologists, Department of Botany and Plant Pathology, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Aug. 27-31.

North Central Weed Control Conference, Hotel Lowry, St. Paul, Minn., Dec. 3-5.

Northeastern Weed Control Conference, Hotel New Yorker, New York, N.Y., Jan. 9-11, 1963.

Southern Weed Control Conference, Admiral Semmes Hotel, Mobile, Ala., Jan. 16-18, 1963.

Weed Society of America Meeting, Pick-Congress Hotel, Chicago, Ill., Feb. 10-13, 1963.

shipyards, oil refineries, manufacturing plants, drainage ditches, oil tank farms, oil wells, walkways, railway yards, sidings, airports, turnpikes, race tracks; any place where vegetation is undesirable.

Another branch of service becoming increasingly popular, especially in the South, is aquatic weed control in lakes, ponds, rivers, etc. Operators in this field will invariably be forced into a lake management program.

Before any operator begins to diversify, he should:

(1) have confidence in what he is doing;

(2) be willing to take some chances;

(3) immediately begin to learn more about the new service; this knowledge comes from consulting experiment stations, watching others in the field, and reading the periodicals;

(4) give his customers good service; and

(5) have his other business well under control so diversification doesn't hurt his bread and butter,