

Technical Problems Reviewed

Professor Carl Gortzig, extension leader in Cornell University's ornamental horticulture department, chaired a second-day discussion session on updated tree care. Problems raised by attending arborists covered various phases of pest control, including the possibility of periodic population counts as a basis for predicting insect peaks and pesticide needs. It was emphasized that reports from arborists in the field could help follow pest developments in order to establish correct timing for optimum control measures.

Other problems broached included the decline of shade trees during long periods of drought, a matter now under investigation. Conferees were also cautioned that study of new cultivar plantings is needed to establish performance records.

Moving on to urban tree plantings, Dr. Robert Mower, of Cornell University, Ithaca, recounted his experience with newly planted shade trees under city conditions of Buffalo and Long Island. Yearly records are kept on new plantings along city streets and highways, Mower explained. Using Buffalo as an example, he added that, though public interest is keen, records show that new plants are often mistreated.

Improvement of tree vigor through watering and fertilizing was another point raised by arborists during the discussion sessions. Attention was drawn to the fact that root action continues through late October and November into December, and that fall fertilizers are taken up to improve twig and bud growth during the short period of early spring, when most growth for the year actually occurs.

A midwinter tree planting ceremony and exhibits of specialized equipment for treemen also marked the '67 meeting, which was hosted by Hudson Valley arborists. Honored at the New Yorkers' banquet was Cornell Professor A. M. S. Pridham, who will soon be retiring after 42 years of service. Site of the '68 annual meeting has been designated as Ithaca.

Know Your Species

CHEAT (*Bromus secalinus*)



Among the more than 40 species of brome grass found in the United States are some of our most important forage grasses and also some of the most bothersome weeds. This particular species, cheat or chess, is described as being nearly typical of the entire group. If the plants were more palatable to farm animals during the entire growing season, instead of during only spring and late fall, they would be considerably more important as feed crops.

Cheat was introduced into the U.S. as an impurity in seed, and is widespread throughout the country. Plants are found in grain fields, grasses, along roadsides, and in various waste places. Cheat is widely regarded as a noxious weed, and its seed often appears in large-seeded grasses, such as tall fescue.

An annual or winter annual, cheat spreads by seed. Young plants often appear in the fall, produce some growth before winter, and resume in the spring. Leaf blades are typically flat, with edges of the sheath growing together to form a tube. Smooth, erect, unbranched stems grow up to 4 ft. tall (1 shows the lower stem). Seed heads are usually open, forming panicles (2).

Each spikelet (3) contains 6 to 10 seeds (4), which are deeply grooved, rather canoe-shaped, and of dark orange-brown color. Seeds may bear a short bristle, $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ in. long.

With a long growing season, plants are able to withstand periods of drought. Since reproduction is by seed, regular mowing of grasses offers little chance for continued survival of the species. Cheat is resistant to 2,4-D, 2,4,5-T and silvex. It has been suggested that chemical control may be obtained from applying Betasan (selective, preemergence herbicide) in the fall when seeds germinate, using normal crabgrass rates of the chemical.

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