Book Review

Breeding Pest-Resistant Trees

By H. D. Gerhold, E. J. Schreiner, R. E. McDermott, and J. A. Winieski, (Pergamon Press, 44-01 21st Street, Long Island City, New York, 11101), 1966. 505 pp., \$24.00.

This is a classic in a subject rarely covered so thoroughly by top workers in the field of tree disease prevention by the use of genetics. It is an exhaustive report on the problem as it exists today and how it might be solved in the future through selective breeding. The book is edited by Henry D. Gerhold (PhD) and Robert E. McDermott (PhD) from the School of Forest Resources, Pennsylvania State University, Ernst J. Schreiner (PhD), Northeastern Forest Experiment Station, Durham, North Carolina, and John A. Winieski (MS), Pennsylvania Dept. of Forests and Waters, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, with over a hundred other participants from various other countries.

The book covers the proceedings of a NATO and NSF Advanced Study Institute on Genetic Improvement for Disease and Insect Resistance of Forest Trees held at the Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pa., Aug. 30 to Sept. 11, 1964. Although intended more for the professional arborist, the book contains good background material for anyone interested in trees.

Subjects covered included research activities relative to tree disease being conducted throughout the world, advances in the basic knowledge of disease and insect resistance of trees, the approaches and methods for genetic improvement in pest resistance of trees, and future needs for such programs.

It becomes obvious that the science of disease prevention in trees by selective breeding is pretty much in the same stage as it is with humans. There is little danger that the "tree doctor" will soon be out of work.

Prescription Forests Now Feasible

Desirable forests might well be regenerated on a "prescription" basis. Selected varieties of seedling trees would be planted and fertilized. So says a Pennsylvania State University scientist, Dr. Robert D. Shipman, associate professor of silviculture. A basic objective, he believes, is renewing wood products, wildlife, and recreational resources by establishment of vigorous, desirable species of trees capable of rapid development.

The need today is to convert submarginal forests to faster growing trees than generally exist, trees that mature rapidly and are of value to the forest products industries. At present about 73 percent of commercial forest land in Pennsylvania is covered with slow-growing, pole-sized hardwood timber that is often of low quality.

The Penn State scientist believes rundown forests can be

(Continued on page 34)

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