

## **Davey Seeks Variance On State Safety Code**

The Davey Tree Expert Co. is seeking a variance from New York's industrial safety code to permit employes to "ride the hook" at the end of a crane.

Section 23 of the state's industrial Code prohibits "riding the hook" which means that a man cannot ride atop a load being swung by a crane, or cannot himself be suspended from the hook.

Raymond Smith, district manager of the tree company in Lancaster, testified at a hearing that his firm felled 20,000 diseased elm trees in Buffalo, N. Y. without a single injury to employes who "rode the hook."

The firm was cited as being in violation of the code last February. The hearing in the State Office Building was conducted by William C. Levis, the hearing officer for the Labor Department's Bureau of Standards and Appeals.

Smith told Levis that Davey Tree Expert Co., a national operation based in Kent, Ohio, had found that riding the hook was the safest method for felling diseased trees.

The method involves suspending a man wearing a safety harness from the end of a crane hook and lowering him into a position where he can attach a crane cable to a limb. The man then slides down a safety line to the ground, the limb is cut by a chain saw and the crane lowers the severed limb slowly to earth.

Smith testified that the method is far more safe than having a man climb a diseased tree and crawl out on a limb that is in danger of cracking, in order to attach a cable.

The Davey firm was supported in its request for a variance by representatives of the New York State Arborists Association, a competitor, and by Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation. The utility company often finds itself trimming or removing trees that interfere with power lines.

Levis said that if the variance is granted by the board, it will apply to limited conditions such as tree removal or trimming and will not make riding the hook permissible in industry. He added that "the need for safety will be paramount in any determination made by the board."

## **Merion Bluegrass Meeting Drew Large Attendance**

President Arden Jacklin of Jacklin Seed Co., Dishman, Wash., presided over the 15th Annual Meeting of the Merion Bluegrass Association, one of the best attended sessions in the group's history, held recently at Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

Among the various topics discussed was the present status of Merion. Dick Bailey of W. R. Grace & Co. Rudy-Patrick Division reported that his findings from a recent tour showed Merion is the main grass used in extensive sod areas.

Arden Jacklin reported on research grants at Oregon State University and Rutgers University, both optimistic about obtaining a satisfactory control for stripe smut.

The hydro, "Miss Merion Bluegrass," winner of the Englehard Palladium Perpetual Trophy at the International Grand Prix in Miami, attracted a great deal of attention during the meeting.

Tuesday was devoted to the traditional farm tour. First stop was the Coeur d'Alene U. S. Forest Service Tree Nursery, which furnishes tree stock for 16 stations.

During the tour, a radius of 25 miles was covered in the examination of various fields of not only Merion but of Pelo ryegrass, NK 100 ryegrass, 0217 Fylking Kentucky bluegrass, Canada bluegrass, A-34 shade tolerant bluegrass, Norlea ryegrass, Park Kentucky bluegrass and S-2 Kentucky bluegrass.

After a luncheon at the State Line and River Ranch of Jacklin

Seed Co., the remainder of the day was spent in the examination of the turf trial grounds and lawn plots at the Ranch and of various segments of Jacklin's expansion program.

## **Cornell Conference Scheduled for Winter**

The Cornell Conference for Nurserymen, Arborists, Garden Center Operators, and Landscape Contractors formerly held in July has been moved to a winter time slot.

The expanded winter series will include meetings at both regional and on-campus locations to enable more ornamental horticulture businessmen to participate and will be geared to their needs as managers of production, sales and service businesses.

Regional conference workshops will consider topics in depth, supplemented with talks of general interest. The Ithaca seminars, on the other hand, will treat in considerable depth specific topics such as employee management, nursery stock harvesting and storage, garden center layout, arboriculture, and horticultural service business management.

A complete program will be available in early fall.

## **Bermudagrass Mite Damage Difficult to Diagnose**

The bermudagrass mite, a tiny wormlike pest that can't be seen with the naked eye, has been causing increased turf damage, reports Dr. S. H. Kerr, entomologist with the University of Florida's Agricultural Experiment Stations.

Coarse, dried bermudagrass is hardest hit. Infested blades turn light green, curl up abnormally and may eventually die. Many homeowners, says Kerr, mistake these signs for damage caused by nematodes or disease. He recommends diazinon for effective control of the mites.