

Cattle Thrive on Hyacinth and Hydrilla in Florida Test

"Everyone laughed at the idea of harvesting waterweeds, grinding them up, and using them for cattle feed," says a University of Florida animal scientist. "But after a year of feeding tests, even the cattle seem to think it's a good idea."

Unusual though it may be, this method of getting rid of waterweeds is one of the more promising solutions to a problem that now involves almost every state, federal, and local agency in Florida.

By finding just one high volume use, such as cattle feed, for the hard-to-control vegetation, the cost of mechanical harvesting would become economically practical, explains Dr. James Hentges with the university's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

Only the most troublesome waterweeds—the hyacinth and the hydrilla, or "Florida elodea"—have been fed to cattle so far. Other pesky but nutritious aquatic weeds may eventually end up in animal feed, also. Another phase of the study will determine if the weeds can be fed to poul-

try and hogs, he said.

Hungry cattle had been known to eat aquatic weeds right out of the water when land forages are not available. But tests indicate they'll gobble up the vegetation faster if it's processed and mixed with other dietary ingredients such as molasses and cereal grains.

Of the two aquatic forages offered to the cattle, those containing ground up, dehydrated hydrilla were much more popular. They ate less processed water hyacinths because the fibrous material in these plants is bulky. It moved through their digestive systems more slowly, thereby limiting their intake capacity or appetite.

Acceptance of both aquatic forages was measured in terms of the amount consumed and weight gained. A nutritionally balanced feed composed of 75% hydrilla was consumed at rates comparable to feeds containing the same ratio of land forage. On the other hand, feeds containing more than 25% water hyacinths were not consumed fast enough to produce

the desired weight gains.

Some waterweeds were more nutritious than others, and this was attributed to the low fertility or nutrient content of the Orlando and Lakeland fresh water sites from which the weeds were harvested. The project's animal nutritionist, Dr. Ray Shirley, believes higher weight gains can be achieved as the quality and processing of aquatic forages is improved.

Before cattle can actually begin nibbling away on the waterweed problem, some economical way of dewatering the aquatic vegetation must be found. For every ton of dry matter, some 20 tons of hyacinths must be processed. Deciding which process will do the job economically without removing vital nutrients at the same time is being studied by Dr. Larry Bagnall, assistant agricultural engineer for IFAS.

Ultimate success of the animal feeding project will also depend on the development of an inexpensive way to harvest both the floating and submerged waterweeds, he said.

Ansul Introduces Phyban HC For Railroad, Industrial Weeds

A new high concentrate weed control agent for the control of vegetation along railroad rights-of-way and industrial sites is being introduced by The Ansul Company, Marinette, Wis.

Phyban H. C., designed for general post-emergent weed control, is a combination of MSMA (monoso-

dium acid methanearsonate) and a surfactant. It is effective on both broadleaf weeds and grasses.

In addition to controlling weeds along rights-of-way, Phyban H. C. is recommended for use along highways, utility and pipe lines, sidewalks, driveways and parkways, storage areas, and around power plants and buildings. The product has been tested and found effective in controlling such weeds as puncture vine, wild mustard, wild oats,

chickweed, sandbur, ragweed, pigweed, barnyardgrass, giant foxtail and yellow foxtail. It also effects top-kill on perennials such as Johnsongrass, Dallisgrass and nutsedge.

The product is designed for application through regular spraying-equipment. For more details, circle (721) on the reply card.

Liquid Fertilizers Booklet

Know all you want to about water soluble fertilizers? If not, Boyle-Midway, manufacturer of Heller-gro offers a free booklet that takes up many of the questions asked by growers, arborists and nurserymen. The booklet covers mixing, dilution, compatibility with insecticides and fungicides, turf-feeding, tree propagation and nourishment, foliar techniques, and use in the greenhouse. For more information, circle (722) on the reply card.

HYACINTH CONTROL SOCIETY

dedicated to the control of noxious aquatic weeds

Invites YOU to join TODAY

MEMBERSHIP: \$8

Annual Meeting

Journals are available covering 10 years of aquatic weed control experience both in the field and via research

Stan Abramson, Sec. Treasurer

7501 Paradise Place, Tampa, Florida 33619