

CONTINUOUS TRAINING

Technique For Holding Employees

Diked out in Cardinal plumage, Fred Diehl, Bruce-Terminix of Broward, Inc., Fort Lauderdale, gave his audience advice on how to prevent expensive turnover in employees, or, how it is in the ornamental horticultural spray business. He, and his teammate, Douglas Palmer, Broward Community College, shared an important niche in a recent short course program; Doug speaking on the mechanical requirements for sprayers, and Fred turning the barb in the field of labor relations.

The short course was held by the Horticultural Sprayers' Association of Florida in Fort Lauderdale, and was co-sponsored by the Florida Pest Control Association. The HSAF also marked its annual meeting, with officers and directors being elected.

A prime factor in preventing employee turnover, Mr. Diehl said, is to supply proper training before putting a man in the field alone. But, "some of you won't spend ten minutes to instruct a new employee, but you will take 30 minutes to give him hell." And, stop saying "sprayman." It is a service job with dignity, and should be referred to accordingly. He suggested "spray technician."

Take an untrained man and never stop training him. Don't be biased; forget the long hair and, don't draw conclusions. He stressed too, the importance of first impressions for both management and applicant. "Your attitude as an employer must indicate enthusiasm for your company and the position you are filling; show some spirit."

Don't do all the talking; this is a time to listen, to evaluate the applicant. Also, don't be hepped on education; some men without degrees can come up with better ideas than the "educated."

Employee turnover is not due to size of the pay check or the benefits, but from lack of basic training when a new man reports for work. Mr. Diehl suggested first, sending him on the job with one of your "old timers," but one who can communicate. This doesn't necessarily mean your "best" man, either, but one who can teach. Some know the business backward and forward, but are

unable to pass that knowledge on to others.

Training, Mr. Diehl stressed, takes time and patience; don't let a new man's interest wane . . . ask him leading questions right along; give him bulletins and magazines about the industry to read; make him feel a part of the team . . . make him understand that you are concerned about his progress.

By all means, explain about the cost of doing business; equipment, labor, time, etc. Show what was collected on the job he just finished; that it isn't all gravy. It is easy and understandable how an employee may get the idea while sweating behind the hose, that you are sitting in an air conditioned office . . . getting rich! When you send him on a job he must realize he is in charge of a large piece of your wallet.

Only your attitude can make an employee proud to be working for you, and forestall expensive turnover in men.

Dr. Donald Short, Department of Entomology, University of Florida, told of a "juvenile hormone" being tested on sod webworms and army worms, designed to keep them small and non-productive.

Ralph W. White, Southern Turf Nurseries, Pompano Beach said that the key to diagnosing diseases and pest trouble in turf is "working education" . . . keeping abreast of the plentiful technical information available, attending short courses and being active in "your industry's trade association." The practical comes with observation, experience, etc.; this is not a science, but an art. Also, "education is no substitute for flat feet. You can be over educated without the practical know how."

He stressed the importance of keeping legible records; you can't keep everything in your head. Study the seasonal peculiarities of pests, and the "patterns" of grass. Be a careful observer; anticipate results of drought, too much water. . . . With time they will form a pattern . . . but remember . . . symptoms do not necessarily indicate the cause.

President Joseph C. Shaw, Shaw Nursery and Landscape Co., South Miami, relinquished the gavel to

Craig Anderson, The Professional Sprayers, Inc., of Fort Lauderdale. Other officers include Charlie P. Johnson, Charlie P. Johnson Spray Co., Miami, executive vice president, and three regional vice presidents: Larry Hatcher, Plant Industry, Inc., Lantana; Roger Harris, Roger's Landscape Service, Pompano Beach and Patricia Bay; Pat's Spray Service, Winter Haven.

Illinois To Hold Pesticide Clinics

A series of one-day clinics to acquaint Illinois pesticide dealers and applicators with new provisions in the Custom Application of Pesticides Act are scheduled during March.

Ten clinics across the state will review important revisions in the licensing of dealers and applicators. The University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Service and the Illinois Department of Agriculture, Division of Plant Industry will jointly sponsor the clinics.

Specialists from the university will provide up-to-date pest control recommendations for small package dealers. This year the information will also be included for applicators and operators who control tree, shrub and turf pests.

According to the act, pesticide applicators and operators must now be licensed, says Roscoe Randall, University of Illinois extension entomologist.

Two types of licenses will be issued. One will be the pesticide applicator's license issued to persons who own or operate custom application businesses. The other, the pesticide operator's license, will be issued persons employed or directly supervised by pesticide applicators. This includes supervisors and operators of application equipment, persons handling, mixing, applying pesticides outside a structure, and disposing of excess materials and containers.

The revised law also includes people who apply landscape and turf pesticides commercially.

Representatives from the Department of Agriculture, Division of Plant Industry, will administer the examinations for both licenses at the end of each clinic.

Dealers and applicators can also contact their county extension office to make reservations for the clinics they plan to attend.