

trimmings

ASTROMOTH—that's what they call 'em. Gypsy moth eggs started to hatch aboard Skylab, said the astronauts. NASA put 500 wild eggs and 500 laboratory reared eggs of gypsy moth aboard the space station. So far several of the wild eggs have hatched. Nothing happened to the lab reared eggs. What does it mean? Simply that gypsy moth eggs can hatch in zero gravity. This could end the moths' normally long hibernation period in USDA's sterilization program. Earth experiments to induce egg hatch earlier have failed. Exposure to zero gravity for a sustained period offers a potential breakthrough.

DIESEL engines account for about 85 percent of the engines purchased in new farm tractors, says the Farm and Industrial Equipment Institute (FIEI). In the larger sizes, the numbers approach 100 percent. Dependence on diesel fuel has been increasing steadily over the years. In 1967, 75 percent of the tractor horsepower provided agriculture was related to diesel.

DAY LENGTH is the only constant environmental variable for insects to key their body functions to and prepare for overwintering. The tiny changes in the day length trigger a "biological clock" within the insect's brain. Changes take place in the body chemistry which result in a condition known as insect diapause. There is an increase in body fat and a decrease in respiration rate and feeding. Reproductive organs in both insect sexes become non-functional. Research from Canada indicates that some diapausing insects produce glycerol which serves as an anti-freeze agent, allowing insects to withstand extreme cold temperatures.

ONE MINUTE of time saved each day gives an extra half hour each month.

THE SENSE OF URGENCY to clean up the environment and to make life safer has brought on some hasty governmental actions, says Parke C. Brinkley, National Agricultural Chemicals Assoc. "Much of this action was born of expediency rather than of thoughtful weighing of consequences. Some of agriculture's most valuable production tools have been removed or drastically cur-

tailed. Little more than lip service has been given to the necessity for measuring benefit against risk, or to the fact that certain trade-offs may be in our best interests. We have seen it happen with certain pesticides, fertilizers, growth stimulators, and energy.

"Behind it all is the fact that the environmentalists' view of agriculture has been largely based on its contribution to pollution. There is little understanding of the vital role played by fertilizers and pesticides in the production of food and fiber . . ."

SAFETY IS A FULL-TIME JOB is the second safety film now available through Charles Machine Works, Inc. It's 17 minutes long. The story line centers around a construction superintendent charged with his company's safety program. It's available in either 16mm reels or in Super 8mm cartridges. For more details, contact a Ditch Witch dealer or Tom Tucker, Charles Machine Works,

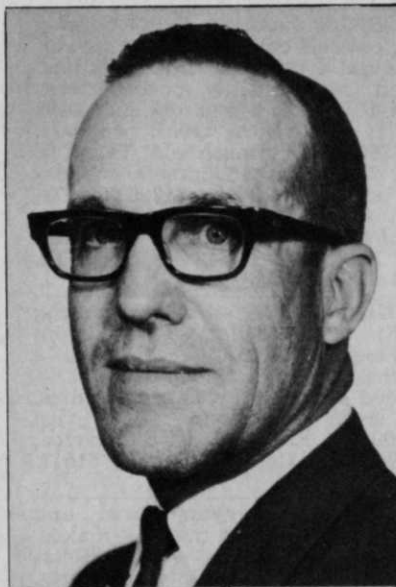
Inc., P.O. Box 66, Perry, Okla.

OSHA INSPECTIONS are on the rise. Department of Labor statistics show the weekly average of inspections for November more than double that of a year ago. In November 1973, OSHA issued to employers 5,301 citations alleging 27,870 violations of job safety and health standards. Proposed penalties totaled \$680,881. The bulk of inspections continues to be centered around manufacturing and construction. But inspections of agricultural facilities accounted for 27, up 52 percent over the previous year.

LOUISIANA'S PINEY ROOTERS know a good thing when they root it. Seems like almost half of every tree cut for marketing remains unused. Wasted parts amount to about 40 percent of most trees cut. Of this, about 16 percent is in the tree root. Researchers are now looking for ways to use a greater portion of this waste, besides letting the hogs root around it.

YELLOW FOXTAIL (*setaria lutescens*)

By **DR. WAYNE W. HUFFINE**
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Yellow foxtail is a tufted annual grass commonly found throughout much of the United States, except for the cooler northern areas. Sometimes it is mistaken for crabgrass and its occasionally called Yellow Bristlegrass because of its tightly clustered seed heads with greenish, yellow bristles, resembling the tail of a fox. The stems are flattened and the lower parts are often tinged with red.

The seed germinates in late spring or early summer, and the plants reach maturity by mid-summer. After producing an abundance of seed for the next year's infestation, it dies after the first heavy frost in the fall. This unwanted turfgrass weed seems to flourish in most all growing sites except shade.

EDITOR'S NOTE: An 8½ x 11-inch color print of Yellow Foxtail shown at the right is available, at no charge, by writing to: O. M. Scott & Sons Company, Marysville, Ohio 43040.