



One of the trucks in this custom applicator's inventory is an Econoline pickup. It's size and mobility make it possible to easily get to the job and perform the needed service. For-

rest Lytle's business volume has increased about 3000 percent from the first year of his operation.

Sales Up For Ohio Custom Applicator

"From the day we started out in business we've never been completely caught up," says Forrest Lytle, owner and operator of Lytle and Sons, one of southern Ohio's oldest and most trusted custom application businesses. "Our sales have jumped every year since 1944, and I'm sure they're going to keep right on going."

Within a 25-mile radius around greater Cincinnati, Lytle and Sons carry out expert custom spray and weed eradication programs for such major accounts and operations as General Electric, Proctor and Gamble, hospitals, municipalities, cemeteries and the billboard industry. Forrest Lytle speaks proudly of the growth of his business.

"We started out in business with \$1,100 — the cost of our first sprayer," says Lytle. "Despite forecasts of doom from some of our friends, our business volume has skyrocketed about 3000 percent since our first year of operation."

The success of Lytle & Sons is due in large measure to Forrest Lytle's keen awareness of knowing exactly what the customer wants — and

then delivering, first time, every time.

"The customer wants to see results — plain and simple," says Lytle, "and we give him results. When we promise to get rid of weeds around a city's baseball diamond, we do it — no if's, and's or but's."

Attesting to the success of this basic common-sense business philosophy is the fact that the best advertisement for Lytle and Sons is a job well done.

"We're in our 30th year of business and we've never used a newspaper advertisement or anything of the kind," proclaims Lytle. "We depend solely on personal recommendation and word-of-mouth. We know that your best advertisement is to do your job right. Ninety percent of all our business is repeat business. We've found that a lot of our work comes from companies telling each other about us. Of course, the product you use is also extremely important."

For his general weed killing programs, Forrest Lytle uses Daconate, a postemergent herbicide. He nor-

mally mixes Daconate at the rate of three gallons per 100 gallons of water.

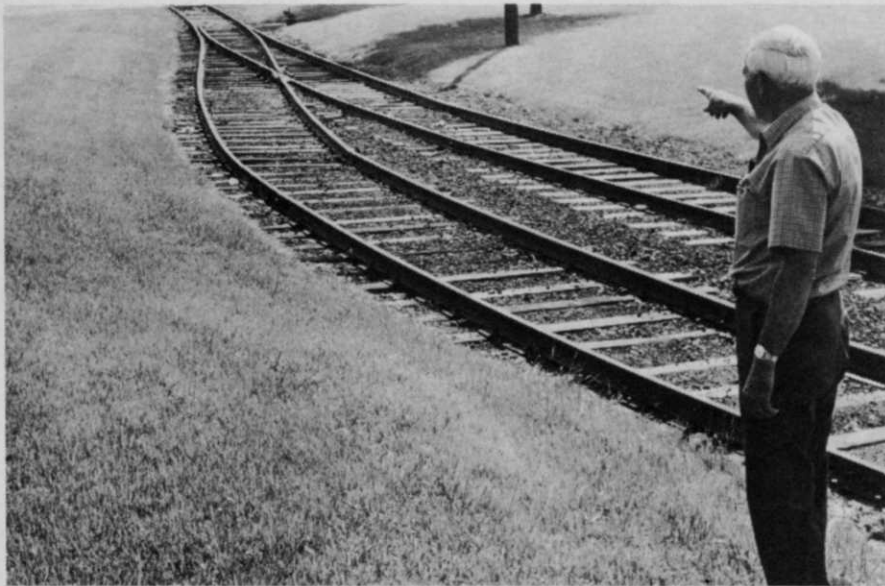
"That's my recommended knock-out dose," the colorful applicator says.

"Daconate takes weeds right down; it hits hard and does the job quickly. Daconate usually gets results for us in three days, although when applying it on really hot days, you can turn around and see the weeds burning up right behind you."

"Two years ago we sprayed soil sterilants between Christmas and New Year's — the first time in my 30 years in business that we sprayed for chickweed in the wintertime," Lytle exclaims. "Then, last spring there was so much rain we didn't turn a wheel until May — the weather has a tremendous impact on our business."

"In the beginning we had to hit weeds several times in a season," Lytle explains. "However, with the chemicals available today, we hit them once and they're dead, although in a few cases we have to

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Lytle inspects a railroad treated with residual herbicides. He says he can't think of anything he dislikes about the custom spray business. Note how herbicides are carefully applied to prevent leaching.

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go back and hit the tougher ones twice a year."

Lytle says he can't think of anything he dislikes about the custom

spray business, "only that you have to be real careful about wind drift and leaching. If these chemicals hit a tree, it's 'curtains.' By the same token, this power is exactly why I use these sterilants, like Hyvar X and others."

The firm, which now has 12 employees, was one of the first custom application businesses in the greater Cincinnati area. The company owns eleven trucks and a wide variety of "Hi-Boy" and other spraying equipment suitable for tackling almost any type of commercial spraying job. Lytle serves customers in northern Kentucky and as far west as the Indiana line. Despite his firm's success, Forrest Lytle doesn't plan any expansion in the near future.

"We have no plans to enlarge our territory at the present time," he says, "although we've had plenty of offers. We were offered a nice chunk of the billboard business in Cleveland but turned it down. We want to continue our loyalty and good service to our present customers for now."

Before starting his custom application business 30 years ago, Lytle was self-employed in the meat packing business. He admits the change over to the custom application business was "quite a switch. My trouble has always been that I like to get in a place, run it to its top dollar,

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This parking lots was treated with bareground herbicides to prevent weed growth. For general weed control, Lytle uses Daconate at the rate of three gallons per 100 gallons water.

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and then, unfortunately, find that I have lost interest in it. For me, the custom spraying business has always been a challenge. You can get as big as you want to."

Lytle is very careful to see that all his men are properly trained before sending them out on a spraying job. He never lets a new man perform a spray assignment alone, no matter how simple or routine. By the second year, a man is expected to have learned the basics of

the business quite thoroughly, although Lytle still personally supervises most of the work himself. "Turf jobs, especially, require a real professional touch," he cautions them.

For a large customer, like Proctor and Gamble's big Cincinnati plant, he maintains 54 acres of railroad tracks alone, in addition to actual plant areas and parking lots, which he keeps absolutely weed-free. For railroad track areas, Lytle uses the spot-kill properties of Daconate to prevent any damage to surrounding trees. During the plant's regular working week, it's almost impossible to take care of the track areas because of the constant railroad operations, so Lytle and Sons cover that big job—all summer long—on weekends.

In addition to Proctor and Gamble, Lytle and Sons use Daconate, or a tank mix of Daconate and Hyvar on other vegetation-kill accounts including such heavy Cincinnati-area industries as Pollack Steel, Millicron, General Electric and Ashland Oil. For these jobs, Lytle tackles everything from parking lots and fences to keeping river banks free of unwanted growth. He

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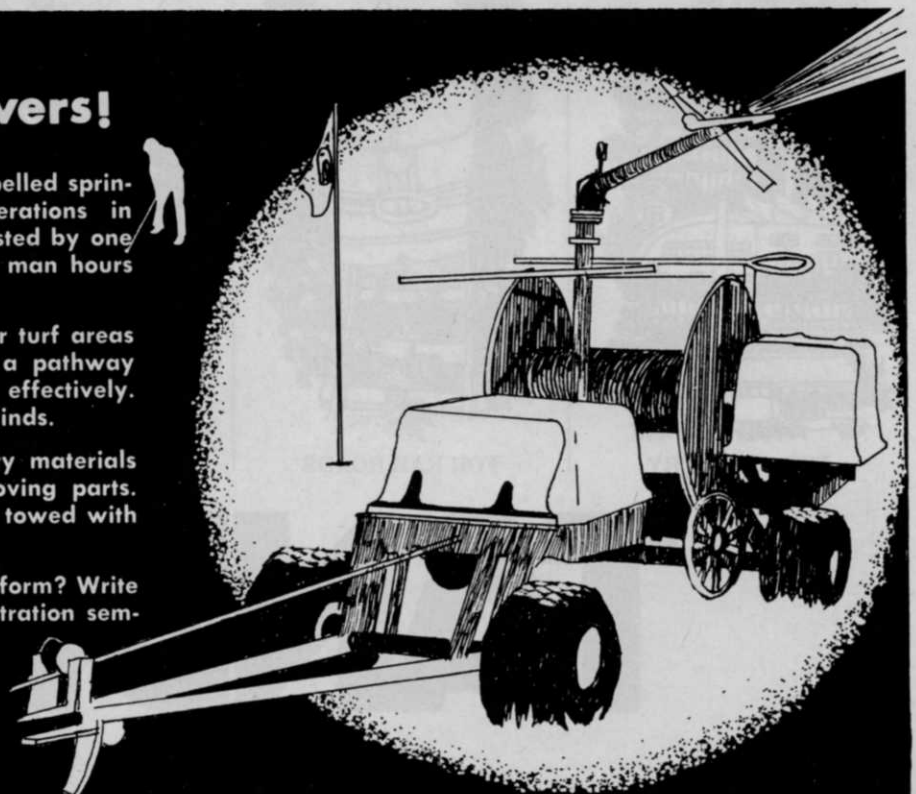
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also handles spraying activities at a number of cemeteries. In addition, Lytle and Sons keep over 500 area billboards free of obstructing weeds and fast-growing vegetation and also maintain a large number of golf courses, swimming pools and tank farms. Recently, he sprayed a 6½-mile section of Interstate 75 near Cincinnati but doesn't plan to take on any more highway contracts.

One of the most unique aspects of

Lytle's operation is the cost of equipment. For most of the sterilization work, ordinary 55-gallon oil drums are used as spray tanks. "I use drums for two reasons," expounds Lytle. "First of all, they are cheap." Secondly, at the end of a use period, I can dispose of them and there is no expensive spray tank to clean out, repair or replace. Along with these bargain basement tanks, Lytle combines another cost saving innovation—his spray pumps. A Hahn 5-horsepower gear pump with a 15-gallon per minute capacity is used. Attached to this is a light ¾

inch, two-braid chemical hose.

In the final analysis, the key to Lytle and Sons' success seems to lie in Forrest Lytle's all-out enthusiasm to do an unconditionally first-rate job.

"A lot of guys have tried this business part time—but it's not a part-time business. Any job in this field—if it's worth doing—it's worth doing right."

Lytle's several hundred customers seem to agree. □

Water Hyacinth Nutrient Potential Explored

Complete removal of the water hyacinth and subsequent disposal in soil would alleviate the nuisance in affected water, lower the nutrient content of those waters, and benefit the receiving soil. This is the conclusion of two University of Florida researchers.

J. V. Parra and C. C. Hortenstine contend that the organic matter content of water hyacinths would improve the sandy soils in Florida. Characteristics such as structure, cation exchange capacity, buffering capacity and water holding capacity would be improved.

In addition, organic matter serves as a storehouse of macronutrients and micronutrients.

According to the scientists, water hyacinth is considered a major deterrent to water sports and water transportation in many parts of the world. The rank growth becomes particularly obnoxious in lakes and streams that are eutrophic. In Florida, annual costs for control of this weed amount to several million dollars.

Most control procedures are predicated on the use of chemicals which allow the hyacinths to become part of the debris and, thus, constitute a permanent sink for nutrients.

Speaking at the Weed Science Society of American meeting in Atlanta, recently, the scientists reason that nitrogen is of especial interest when an organic material is applied to the soil. The total nitrogen content of water hyacinths varies generally between one and two percent. However, the carbon/nitrogen ratio is probably of greater importance.

Normal soil has a C/N ration between 9 and 12 which is maintained at almost a fixed value. When organic matter with a C/N ratio greater than 12 is added to soil, microorganisms must draw upon the soil nitrogen in order to assimilate or absorb the added carbon.



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