

trimmings

If you thought puberty was rough . . . an insect theory that larva hibernation is caused by the juvenile hormone is the subject of research conducted by a University of Missouri-Columbia's Agricultural Research Station entomologist. Dr. G. M. Chippendale, who developed the theory, was recipient of a National Science Foundation two-year grant of \$51,800. He explained that the hormone is secreted from a gland inside the insects' head and prevents them from maturing. This hormonal function could be exploited in future insect control practices, he said.

South of the border, PS Construcciones SA has been appointed Toro distributor in Mexico. The company, headquartered in Mexico City, will handle all Toro products and maintain a parts warehouse and service facility. According to a company official, this is Toro's first full-line distributor in Mexico.

Market Facts, Inc.'s Center for Quantitative Sciences was awarded a government contract for development of a consumer safety education program for outdoor power equipment including power mowers, garden tractors, snow throwers, chain saws and hedgetrimmers. U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission awarded the grant.

The second volume of a 5-volume series of the metric system dealing with legislation and regulatory controls is now available from the J. J. Keller and Assoc., Inc. METRIC SYSTEM GUIDE — VOLUME II can be obtained, from the publisher, for \$59.00 each. For more information contact J. J. Keller, 145 W. Wisconsin Ave., Neenah, Wisconsin 54959.

New housing starts have shown a sharp drop this year due to scarcity of mortgage money, high interest rates and other inflationary problems. "There is a strong correlation between housing starts and sales of industrial tractors," said John E. Mitchell, executive vice president, Americas for Massey-Ferguson. "When housing starts to go up or

down, sales of industrial tractors reflect this rise or fall some six months later." Mitchell spoke at the 81st annual convention of the Farm and Industrial Equipment Institute in Orlando, Florida.

Smelling like a rose were a number of staff members at Rutgers University involved as expert witnesses in a case in which a group of Cherry Hill, New Jersey residents took action against the township. It seems a sanitary landfill owned by the township produced decomposition gases which moved laterally underground and resulted in the death of many trees and shrubs on adjoining private properties. The staff's tests found extreme amounts of explosive gases, over 15 per cent carbon dioxide and zero oxygen in the soils where the vegetation was dead. Based on their testimony, the plaintiffs won a out-of-court settlement of \$60,000 for damages and nuisances caused by the landfill.

Now we've heard it all. Floratam, a somewhat misleading name for a new variety of St. Augustine grass, appears not only to resist chinch bugs but actually fights back by killing many of the bugs that attack it. The new variety is being released jointly by the University of Florida and Texas A & M University. "The chinch bug resistance is really a fringe benefit. Floratam is the result of efforts to find an improved variety of St. Augustine grass to combat SAD (St. Augustine Decline), a virus disease which has destroyed lawns in Texas and is now spreading into other areas," explained Dr. Albert Dudeck, associate professor with the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences at Florida. In confined tests more than half the chinch bugs that fed on Floratam died, but it is not known what makes the grass unpalatable to the pest. It is thought, however, that the grass interferes with the life processes of the bugs in some way.

Not a kit but a new brochure, detailing steps for community-built golf facilities has been published by the American Society of Golf Course Architects. It includes information on research, costs, site selection, financing and other important aspects of planning and building a municipal course. For a copy of the brochure, write American Society of Golf Course Architects, 221 N. LaSalle St., Chicago, Ill. 60601.

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