

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

By Roger Funk, Ph.D., Davey Tree Expert Co., Kent, Ohio

Question: I would like to hear an expert's true opinion on the use of tree spikes (gaffs) for climbing and its effects on the tree.

Answer: We do not recommend the use of gaffs or any other practice that unnecessarily disrupts the protective bark layer.

Recent evidence has shown that trees respond chemically and structurally to a wound and compartmentalize or "wall off" the area around the wound. Some species are highly effective at containing invading microorganisms that lead to internal decay, while others display a weak wound response.

I would suggest that you contact Dr. Alex Shigo for more detailed information on wound research. His address is: USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Forest Experiment Station, Durham, New Hampshire 03824.

Question: Will two inches of topsoil and a layer of sod cause any serious damage to a pure stand of Norway pine (*Pinus resinosa*)?

Answer: I do not have any specific information for *Pinus resinosa*, but we have records of as little as

one inch of fill soil causing the decline of other species.

Of course, some species will tolerate fill over the root system better than others, but, in most cases, the roots of established trees will be injured by any change in grade.

Trees which have had fill placed over the root system should be watched carefully for at least ten years. Thinning and fertilization will help reestablish the equilibrium between the roots and shoot (stem and foliage) of affected trees.

Question: What can be done to control verticillium in maple trees? My maples are dying.

Answer: Several researchers are testing materials for chemical control or suppression of verticillium wilt. Dr. Peter Rice of The Royal Botanic Garden in Ontario has had encouraging results with Lignasan BLP. However, the treatments with Lignasan and with the other chemicals currently being tested are still experimental and are not recommended for commercial use.

The standard recommendation is good cultural practices to minimize the severity of the verticillium infection.




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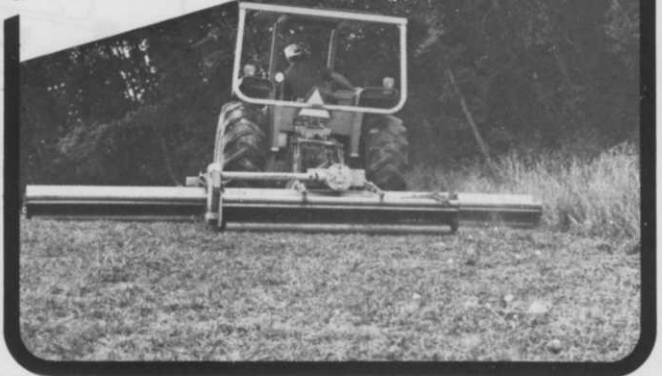
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