

**Farm Facts**

**ALFALFA PROBLEMS.** The spring of 1966 struck a severe blow to one of Kentucky's most valuable forage crops—alfalfa. First, the alfalfa weevil increases its tenacity in areas of previous infestation and spread to many fields where previously spraying was needed. Then, about the time when it had been unknown, the heavy rains either prevented the work or reduced the effectiveness of the poison. In many instances the first cutting was lost because of insects or rain.

What to do about alfalfa in the future is a difficult problem. The crop is, at the best, a very delicate one. It requires a deep, well-drained soil with an abundance of lime and mineral nutrients. It is often a costly crop to establish and maintain but one well worth the cost to dairymen who have favorable soil to grow it on and high producing cows to consume it.

Now, with the advent of the weevil, the additional cost of spraying and the risk of losing the crop increases the production costs and makes the future of alfalfa questionable except under the best of conditions.

While the loss of alfalfa would be a severe blow to some dairymen it would not be irreparable. There is already a trend to an all silage-grain program in which the cattle are fed silage the year round with proper supplements to balance it. Corn, or one of the new cane hybrids, furnish the principal bulk for summer and fall ensiling, supplemented by grass and small grains for spring filling. A difficult problem in year round silage is the high cost involved in providing silo capacity and filling equipment, but most farmers now have adequate capital or credit available for this.

This spring I have been involved in landscaping my church's grounds, using, as much as possible, plants of religious and historical significance. One of the most interesting plants used was the "Dawn of the Redwood", a species said to be the ancestor of the giant redwoods of the pacific coast. For a long

time this tree was known to have existed only because its fossils had been found embedded in rock which was formed over 20 million years ago. The tree was thought to have become extinct about that time. Then, in 1944, a grove of live trees was found growing in a remote valley of central China. The foliage of the newly discovered trees matched perfectly the imprints left by its ancestors long before the ice age!

Seeds and plants of the newly discovered Chinese trees were brought to this country in 1944 and have done well. The tree is a rapid grower and attains a height of 100 feet or more. Its feathery foliage, unusual bark and symmetrical shape make it most interesting specimens to grow on school or church grounds where space is available for a large tree with low, wide spreading limbs.



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