

Agriculturally Speaking

Cut Tobacco Stalks And Turn Up Roots

By FRANK W. REAMS, County Agricultural Agent

COMING EVENTS

Sept. 10: Agricultural Workers Council, Warrenton, 3:45 p. m.

Sept. 10: Inez Community Club, Clubhouse, 8 p. m.

Sept. 17-28: DHIA Supervisor's Training Course, State College.

Sept. 10-20: Sheep Producers Referendum.

Sept. 20: Feeder Calf Sale, Rocky Mount.

Sept. 24: Warren County Fair Opens (Exhibits received 8 a. m.-5 p. m.).

Sept. 30: Final date to apply for state and federal gasoline tax refund.

high quality and large acreage yields. Nematodes breed faster than rabbits and you can imagine what would happen if the stalks are left standing for an additional generation.

EXCELLENT WEATHER

The weather has not been perfect this summer but it has been so good one hesitates to say anything but praise. Several of the tobacco producers who make a practice of irrigation have been asked about comparing their 1961 and 1962 yields and quality. In every case, the producers report both years about the same. Irrigation is not everything by any means but it is a tremendous help when the weather man cuts off the faucet and turns on the heat.

I can't recall any two more beautiful days on tobacco market opening than last week. On the average, the old boy averages things out so you can keep your raincoat and overcoat handy.

On top of this, crop damage from wind and hail is the lowest in history based on records in this office.

PEACE CORPS

We have literature for those people interested in the Peace Corps. On top of that, we have the application forms, so if it's information or action you desire just drop by the office for a conference.

Who may apply: Any American citizen over 18 may apply. There is no upper age limit. Married cou-



Last week I received a very nice letter from a very nice lady in Rocky Mount. She was concerned about a maple tree in her yard. You may have a similar experience in mind so I am going into some detail for the benefit of all readers.

She writes: "Will you please advise me about a maple tree in our yard on which we depend not only for shade but appearance of our lot. It is a

large tree, which for the past five or six years has, by the first of July, began to shed its leaves. By the first of August hundreds a day are falling and when other maples are in their vivid glory in autumn, this one is practically bare.

"We had it professionally fertilized in the spring but although the leaves came out thickly and large, it is following the same pattern as past

years without dependent children can be accepted if both can do needed jobs. Parental approval will have to be obtained by volunteers who are under 21 and who live in states where persons under 21 are legally regarded as minors. Older or retired people can be accepted if they meet other Peace Corps standards and if

they have special skills needed for Peace Corps projects. However, Peace Corps tasks will be performed under arduous living conditions, and for this reason it is expected that most volunteers will be from 21 to 45 years old. Older people may serve as instructors at training centers or as overseas supervisors.

She sent leaves from the tree, nicely packaged, which arrived in good condition. There was no evidence of disease or insect injury which would cause premature defoliation. I suspected root trouble so I wrote and asked some questions which she answered.

Q. Have the roots been cut on one side of this tree or otherwise damaged?

A. "Unfortunately yes. Roots cut on one side of the tree about four feet from trunk 15 years ago."

Q. Has any fill soil been placed around the tree? If so, how much?

A. "Again yes. About 10 inches of soil in a circle about 2 1/2 feet out from the tree."

pears to be normal. A. "The bark seems normal." While I am not ruling out the possibility of root-rot caused by fungi, two answers she gave could cause a steady decline in vigor of her maple—root cutting on one side and over-burden of fill soil around the tree.

Root cutting removes a large number of feed roots which reduces the power of the tree

to absorb water and nutrients. This, in turn, results in loss of vigor. Fill soil, over the roots of established trees, excludes an adequate supply of oxygen to the roots which is essential for normal growth functions. Cotton classifiers determine cotton grades by three factors: color, trash or foreign matter in the cotton, and smoothness of ginning.

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TOBACCO STALKS

If you are the best friend to your future tobacco crop you will cut your stalks immediately and turn up the roots immediately after the final priming. The lowly but powerful nematodes are the parasites that need to be destroyed. Up to this date, I have never seen a field free of all nematodes although some are more heavily infested than others. Solid disking will not do the job as the roots must be turned bottom upwards for the sun, wind and dry soil, will starve the watery juicy nematodes.

After several weeks, brush out the roots with a harrow and your soil is then ready for your fescue-oats rotation. This two to three years rotation will add needed organic matter which is necessary to

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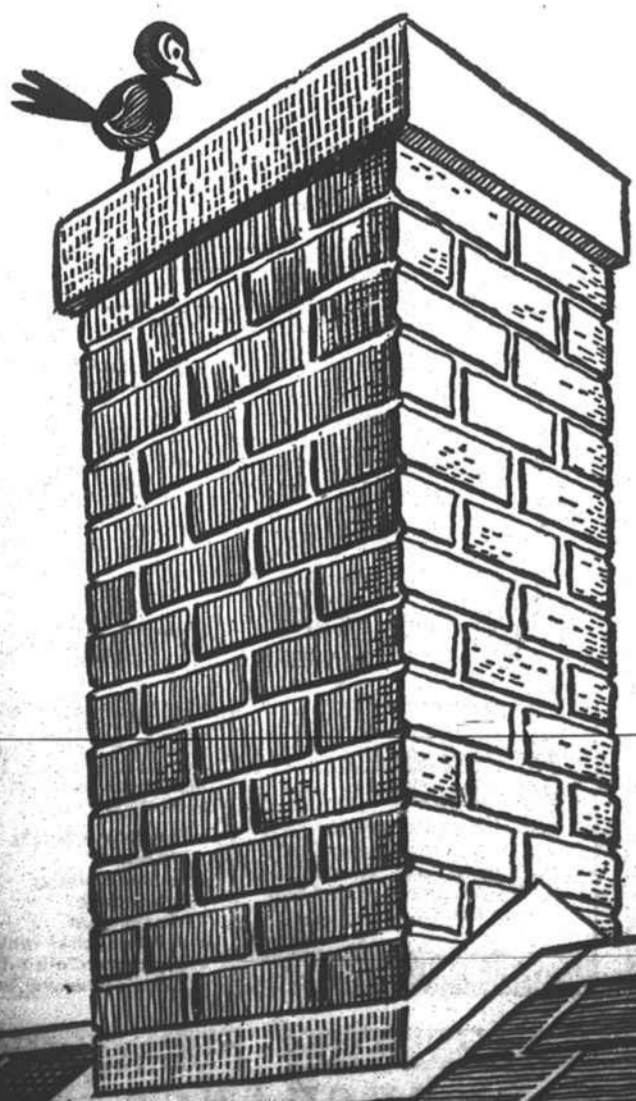
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