

CONNECTICUT
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New Haven, Connecticut

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W A R N I N G T O T O B A C C O G R O W E R S

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"Wild Fire", a bacterial disease of tobacco which threatens disaster to the industry, has again appeared in Connecticut and has infected many seed-beds.

If the coming season is dry and favorable for tobacco, the disease may not be very serious, but in a wet season much greater damage than was done last year is likely, as the germs are carried to the fields chiefly through diseased seed plants.

This Station issues the following suggestions for treatment of beds, the result of a meeting called by the Hartford County Farm Bureau of experts from Connecticut and Massachusetts with tobacco growers after study of infected beds. Suggestions are all that can be offered, since exact knowledge regarding the source and causes of the spread of this disease is at present lacking.

HOW TO KNOW THE DISEASE. The disease shows as light-brown rotten areas on the edge or tip of the leaf, with or without a yellowish-green border; or light yellowish-green spots on the leaf surface, not yet showing brown. If doubtful about it, send specimens to the Station as above.

FROM WHERE DOES IT COME? Not known. Perhaps in tobacco stems or on the seed; possibly it lives over winter in the soil; it may be carried on persons, clothes and tools. It is thought that minute insects, flea beetles etc., have much to do with spreading the infection.

WHAT CAN BE DONE NOW? With the little we know about it at present the following is the best advice that can be given.

(OVER)

(1) If the bed is not infected. With the hope of prevention, spray the plants (with a sprayer, not with a watering-pot) with Bordeaux mixture 4-4-50 and added lead arsenate, made as follows:

Dissolve 4 pounds of copper sulphate in hot water, and dilute to several gallons.

Slake 4 pounds of quick-lime and stir in water to make a thin cream. Strain through a fine strainer into a barrel, and make up to about 20 gallons. Into this pour the copper sulphate solution with constant stirring, and add 1 1/2 pounds of lead arsenate powder (or 3 pounds of the same in paste form) stirred up smooth in water. Dilute the whole to 45 or 50 gallons.

Stir each time before using.

Or use a commercial "dry" or "paste" Bordeaux containing lead arsenate (such as Pyrox, etc.), following directions on the package.

Spray, preferably in the afternoon, so as to cover all leaves with a thin coating, and let it dry at least several hours before watering the bed.

Repeat the spray when it has apparently been washed off or the plants have made new growth.

(2) If the disease is not general but confined to a small area. Kill all plants on the infected area by watering with one quart of formaline in 15 quarts of water.

Spray the rest of the bed as directed in 1.

(3) If all parts of a bed are infected and plants from uninfected beds are scarce, spray the whole as in 1.

(4) Most important of all, keep the beds so thoroughly aired and protected that rain and water of condensation settles in the minimum amount and for the shortest time on the plants. Do not water except in bright weather when moisture dries off the foliage quickly, and use as little as is consistent with good growth.