

INVENTION

Develop Vinegar Pill For Camping, Soldiers

► FOX HOLES may soon become a mecca for the amateur chef who delights in concocting savory sauces and salad dressings.

Picnic wieners, freshly-dug clams and campsite venison are in for a dash of the gourmet's magic.

This has all been made possible with the granting of a patent to two scientists for a dry, imitation vinegar which, they claim, can be safely carried in pocket-size packages or even loosely in tablet form.

The inventors, Thaddeus C. Kmiecik and Kenneth T. Farrell of Chicago, have envisioned new worlds of gastronomical joy through the use of their vinegar powder and other portable, dry condiments.

This is the way it will work:

When a camper or picnicker packs his gear and food stuffs, he will also take along a few vinegar pills, some dehydrated tomato juice powder, dehydrated onion powder, mustard powder, dehydrated soy powder and whatever other dry powder he desires.

When he is ready to concoct his meal, he mixes the ingredients as he sees fit, adds water, and "voila!" catsup, chili sauce, salad dressing, Worcestershire sauce, ad infinitum.

Seen primarily as an aid to the military, the dehydrated vinegar is easily converted back into a liquid condiment by simply adding water. Before the advent of the vinegar pill, the armed services considered it a bit impracticable to include vinegar in emergency rations because of spillage, space and weight. The invention was awarded patent No. 2,696,441.

So, if you happen to see someone take a pill from his vest pocket, drop it into a glass of water and then dump it on his salad, do not become excited. He is probably only dressing his greens.

Science News Letter, February 19, 1955

AGRICULTURE

Farmers Warned of Attacks by Corn Borers

► THE NATION'S corn belt farmers were warned that they may be faced with a serious infestation of the European corn borer this year. Latest figures available reveal that in 1953 the corn borer ate its way through the equivalent of 90,000,000 bushels of grain corn, or three percent of the total national crop. Losses from the 1953 infestation amounted to an estimated \$125,466,000.

Based on field surveys made last fall by 25 states, the U. S. Department of Agriculture issued its warning that 1955 will bring on heavy attacks by the corn borer if spring weather is favorable for the insect's development.

Biggest problem areas, the Department reported, are likely to be in central Iowa, northeastern Nebraska, southeastern South Dakota and central Illinois. Missouri and Ohio might also feel sharp increases over last year's infestation.

There is very little farmers can do before the corn is planted to prevent the corn borer from infesting a crop, Arlo M. Vance, an entomologist at the Agricultural Research Service at Beltsville, Md., stated.

"We do have fairly good control with insecticides," the scientist reported, "primarily DDT." However, once the insect begins to bore, Mr. Vance reported, there is no effective control measure.

The corn borer is essentially a boring insect as its name implies. In the spring the moth lays its eggs on the plant. Greatest injury results from the tunneling and feeding of the young worms that eat through the stalk, ears, tassel, midrib of the leaf and brace roots.

Three main facts were pointed out in the report for this coming corn season that has been made by the Cooperative Economic Insect Survey:

1. For 13 north central states, the corn borer populations last fall averaged 223 insects for every 100 corn stalks as compared with an average of 114 per 100 for the fall of 1953.

2. The corn borer picture is not entirely discouraging in that the average population of these insects took a sharp drop in 12 eastern states.

3. Now known to occur in 37 states, no new states reported attacks by the corn borer last year.

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