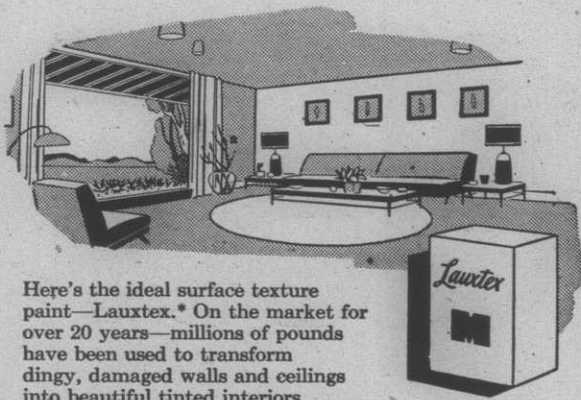


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Goatweed Beetles at Work

Shipments of goatweed beetles arriving from California by scheduled airliner were transferred at Missoula into light planes for final flight to goatweed infested areas in Sanders, Lake, Mineral and Flathead counties. Dawn patrol pilots operating the shuttle service were Jack Corkins, assistant state entomologist, seen in his plane receiving box of beetles from Dr. R. S. Hunt, entomologist from the horticulture branch experiment station, Corvallis. R. L. Warden, extension weed specialist also assisted the entomologists with "operation beetle."



—Montana Farmer-Stockman Photos



Kim Roberts, Sanders county agent, left in picture above, and O. J. Murray, chairman of the western Montana weed control committee, shake out beetles in a thickly infested goatweed area at Ray Meadow's ranch. The western Montana liberation of 52 colonies of about 5,000 of the blue-green beetles each was believed to be the largest planting of weed control insects ever attempted. By the time the beetles arrived in Missoula the goatweed packed with them in the ice cream cartons had been stripped clean of leaves and entomologists were quick to give them another feeding as seen in picture to left. The beetles eat goatweed only. The goatweed spreads rapidly, crowds out other vegetation and is poisonous to livestock.

Spread of goatweed infestations in the west is illustrated in map below prepared by forest service with SCS co-operation. Goatweed was found only along coastal region of California in 1900 but by 1930 had spread into the darker shaded area of map and by 1950 had covered the entire shaded region to the extent of an estimated 150,000 acres in Montana. It is feared the weed would spread like wildfire over the open range country east of the mountains because it grows best on unshaded areas. Importation of the goatweed beetles, now considered the only practical means of large scale control of the weed, was financed by state legislature appropriation. Liberation program was conducted co-operatively by staffs of the state entomologist, extension service, experiment station, forest service, SCS, and western Montana weed control committee.



1950-1960

WHERE WILL IT SPREAD IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS? IF UNCHECKED IT PROBABLY WILL SPREAD INTO THE EASTERN

MONTANA RANGE LANDS. ALSO IT WILL FORCE MORE WESTERN MONTANA GRASSLAND OUT OF PRODUCTION.

WHAT EFFECT WILL IT HAVE ON YOUR LAND?

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