

CONTROL

Sometimes the number of nematodes in the soil will markedly decrease without any active measures being taken against them. Like all other animals, root-knot nematodes have their enemies. The principal enemies in this case are other nematodes, species which prey upon those herein discussed. Doubtless the presence in the soil of these and other enemies often reduces the trouble. It is never safe, however, to depend on this natural control. Generally, if the grower wishes to reduce the infestation, he must take active measures to combat the worms.

CONTROL VERSUS ERADICATION

On old, heavily infested farms, control rather than eradication has been the aim in these experiments. By means of the procedure herein recommended, control, but not complete eradication of the nematodes, has been secured. In other words, the result has generally been to reduce the pests to the point where susceptible crops can be grown for a season. If the nematodes are reduced to only a few spots here and there over a field, leaving 98 percent or more of the crop uninfested, the control is considered satisfactory. It takes many months for the worms to reach again all parts of a field from a few infested spots in it, probably as long as it would take them to make their way in from untreated fields. On the other hand, if the worms remain generally distributed thruout the field, even tho greatly reduced in numbers, the control is not considered satisfactory, as the rapid breeding of the remaining worms will soon result in heavy reinfestation.

Complete eradication is expensive. On a heavily infested farm the nematodes are usually so quickly reintroduced, after being eradicated from a single field, that the attempts are not profitable for the average farmer or trucker. It would seem that in many cases a cheaper procedure, which will enable the crop to be kept reasonably free for a season, would better meet his needs.

In the case of a small infested area in an otherwise clean farm, which often occurs on recently cleared land, much more thoro measures are desirable. The grower can well afford to go to a higher proportionate expense to stamp out a small infestation than he can a large one. In experiments on small greenhouse benches and on plots in the open, where the reinfestation of the land is prevented by cement walls extending to a depth of four feet, the worms have been repeatedly and completely eradicated.