

INTRODUCTION

The destruction of crop plants by insects has been known for many centuries and today constitutes one of the major problems of Agriculture the world over. Previously attempts at control were aimed at complete eradication of the pests concerned by the use of chemicals, but this has been found, in many instances, to be unsatisfactory as a means of control. The drawbacks to the use of chemical control are first discussed in an attempt to show its inadequacy to cope with the insect menace.

The possible measures that could be adopted as a means of combining chemical methods with natural or biological control, with the view to obtaining maximum efficiency, are then considered. Besides discussing the possibility of greater control by simple adjustments in control practices based on more accurate ecological data, attention is paid to the use of the newer selective and systemic insecticides. The constant experimentation and research in this field offers good hope that chemical and biological control methods will be fully exploited and eventually lead to complete control of our insect pests and preservation of man's food, shelter and clothing.

The role of ants is also discussed. No attempt has been made to draw any definite conclusions, but a brief review of the literature is presented.

Lastly some mention is made of the attempts at biological control in the West Indies. Some of these attempts are considered in detail and the reasons for their success or failure cited. The possibilities of effective biological control are also discussed.

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