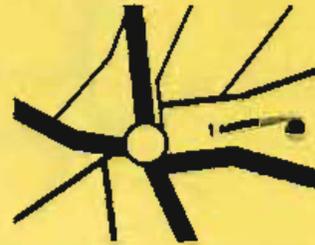


Mosquito Control

Charles D. Murphy, Jr.



The plain, ordinary, unwelcome mosquito cost Delaware \$452,244.81 for the fiscal year 1959.

And from all indications, the insect will be around for some time, taking bites out of the taxpayer's hide as well as his pocketbook.

The mosquito, bred and reared on Delaware's lowlands and marshlands, has a tremendous ability to become immune to powerful new insecticides. This fact, and fact it is, marred an otherwise eventful year for the Division and pointed, again, to the need for long-range control programs.

This program received added impetus when the Division included a laboratory for the use of University of Delaware entomologists in its new quarters. The Division moved its operation from Lewes to a site near Milford, adjacent to Milford airport.

The Division also initiated a water impoundment program, a move which will eventually rid the State of many of its potential mosquito breeding areas.

Though it forged ahead in its drive to control the pest, the Division suffered a major setback in its immediate campaign with the discovery that the insect had developed an immunity to once highly effective BHC. By late summer of 1958 BHC had lost its effect to a point where it was producing less than economical results. The Division immediately switched back to DDT and won a temporary reprieve for the summer.

The water impoundment project, after detailed study produced evidence of its feasibility, was started on land owned by the Fish and Wildlife Service near Little Creek. The State Highway Department assumed the cost of building almost 10,000 lineal feet of dikes.

Another effective blow against mosquito breeding was taken during the year by the renovation and extension of the ditching system in the tidal marshlands, particularly in Kent County. Almost a million lineal feet of ditches were cleaned and an additional 249,000 feet built.