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2-23-1978

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Glaize, Philip, "A Grower's Experience in Pine Mice Control - 1973 Through 1977" (1978). *Eastern Pine and Meadow Vole Symposia.* Paper 84.
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A GROWER'S EXPERIENCE IN PINE MICE CONTROL - 1973 THROUGH 1977

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By 1973 Endrin in Virginia was proving ineffective. Mice were resistant to Endrin in Most orchards.

Dr. Horsfall had started work with Chlorophacione (C.P.N.) just prior to 1973 and Virginia had cleared it for experimental use.

In November we purchased a considerable amount of the first that was manufactured.

The first C.P.N. that was applied at the recommended rate of .2 lbs. per acre was very effective. The weather was fairly warm and according to our checks we had 90 percent control.

Unfortunately, part of our C.P.N. separated due to a bad formulation and we could not complete the job.

In 1974, with new material we again sprayed, however, the weather was colder and I believe the mice were feeding further underground because our control was only 60%.

In 1975 we decided to disc and hand bait using zinc phosphide with mixed results.

In 1976 I decided to try Endrin again after a layoff of 4 or 5 years. This turned out to be disastrous. We wasted a lot of money, got no control, and had to spend the winter with a crew of women hand baiting with Rozol. The hand baiting, where done thoroughly, proved very effective.

In 1977 we tried spraying again with Chlorophacione in November. The weather was bad with a lot of rain. This could have been part of the reason for our lack of control and only 65% effectiveness.

We have been putting our shingles, one between each tree or every other tree and they have proven a very effective place to hand bait whereever we have runs. It is necessary to move some to spots where we can find fresh runs.

Whether a grower sprays, discs, or uses hand bait it is very important to keep check stations and have a reliable person run checks with sliced apples and bait continuously.

At one time I thought C.P.N. was the answer, now it seems we are still a long way from finding a satisfactory and economical solution to pine mice control.

There has been some discussion about the use of various root stocks as mice seem to have a preference for certain varieties. This should be researched.