HEATING SEED ROOMS TO DESTROY INSECTS.¹

E. G. Montgomery.

The problem of protecting stored seeds and grains from insects is one that confronts almost every agronomist. Often hundreds of small lots are kept over from year to year or even for several years. If the seed room becomes thoroughly infested, it often requires constant care to prevent the total loss of these samples.

Fumigation with carbon bisulfid or hydrocyanic acid gas is the most common method of protection used. This, however, has certain disadvantages and is not always effective. Both of these gases are dangerous to human life and, therefore, are not always safe to use when the storage room is in a classroom or office building. The fire danger from carbon bisulfid is so great that it cannot be used safely in large quantity, when it is likely to leak into adjoining laboratories or offices. The hydrocyanic acid gas is also corrosive and its continued use will generally destroy sacks and also the germination of seed.

Experience has also shown that fumigation is only partly effective, as it seldom kills all the eggs or larva. The gas can not penetrate into closed containers such as cans or bottles, and penetrates only very slowly into large masses of grain.

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