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Boll weevils plaguing **Texas cotton farmers**

Despite a rough start in some areas due to a siege of wet spring weather, Texas' cotton crop looks with hot weather." promising. In fact, with a general rain the next few weeks and some letup in insect activity, a good crop could result.

stat, and gin heavy spring storms caused consider-able replanting in some locations. Irrigation is now in full swing where water is available. Hot, dry winds are depleting soil moisture, and dryland crops in harms, but w Bob Metzer, cotton specialist with the Texas Agricula largely dependent and Extension Service. "We started the season with good deep moisture

me producers, and fleahoppers caused damage in me locations, resulting in loss of early fruit set. In ars a Paget-lit SO ars a Pagetan addition, some squares were lost to the wet weather, nusic — the which also caused boll rot problems in coastal and certain bothan southern areas.

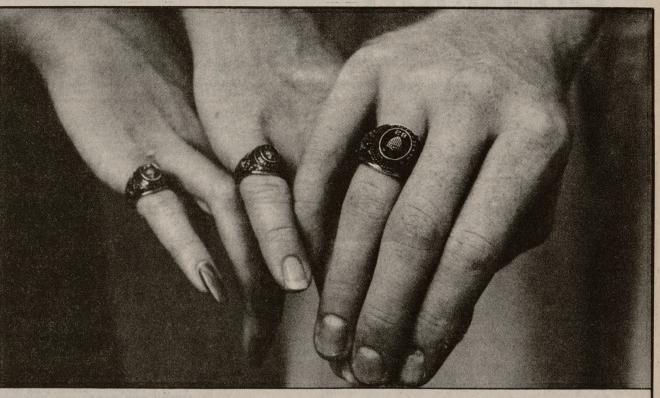
Cotton in the High and Rolling Plains and western areas got off to a good start this year, the specialist said, although heavy spring storms caused consider-

Harvesting is now under way in the Rio Grande Valley, with good yields, especially in well-drained

"We started the season with good deep moisture word I haven in most areas to sustain the crop, but a rain in early tion, has dear. About 7.4 million acres were planted to cotton in Texas this spring, which is more than half of the nation's crop of about 14.2 million acres. "We currently have the potential range of 325 to s," the profess 350 pounds of lint per acre," Metzer said. "We might which reveal even get close to the 400-pound mark if needed rains ich is unattrate come and insect damage is limited." It to reveal mere producers, and fleahoppers caused damage in some producers, and fleahoppers caused damage in

clude applying an insecticide in combination with a defoliant when preparing the crop for harvest, and then destroying stalks and plowing them under as soon as possible after harvesting

"Efforts to reduce overwintering bollweevils is "A problem looming ahead is that of cotton root rot, particularly in the Central Texas Blacklands," with late fruit can provide a safe haven for boll Metzer said. "Root rot is always a problem when



They're finally here

Photo by Cathie Feighl

last week. Rings that were ordered this spring can be picked 12 noon and from 1-5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

These hands are displaying the new senior rings that arrived up at the Ring Clerk's desk in Heaton Hall from 8:15 a.m. to

Vegetable oil could work as fuel, but cost is high

farmer could pour a bottle of plain ol' vegetable nto his tractor's diesel fuel tank, but a researcher lying the substitute fuel says he wouldn't recomnd it. At least not yet.

There are several reports in the literature that getable oil off the grocery shelf has been used essfully as a direct substitute for diesel oil for periods of time," said Dr. Cady Engler of the as A&M Food Protein Research and Develop-Center. "But we don't know what the longeffects on the engine will be.

Also, the same type of oil will work in one engine not in another. A given diesel engine may work one oil, such as sunflower, but not with oil from er crop.

ingler said vegetable oil currently costs twice as h as diesel but it is being studied for its applicaduring emergency situations when diesel isn't

from a farmer's standpoint, when it is time to or harvest, he needs fuel right then," Engler I. If we have another interruption in petroleum orts, for example, vegetable oil might serve quite

t this point, I don't know what kind of proces-

sing steps to recommend to a farmer for turning his oilseeds into diesel fuel. But I would say it would be simpler than converting grain to alcohol.

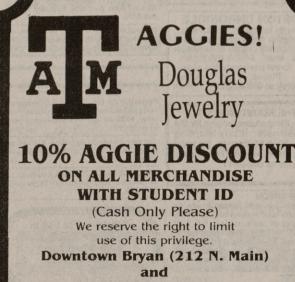
He and other researchers from the University's agricultural engineering and agricultural economics departments are working on a three-year study of vegetable oils for fuel. Current work is being funded by the Texas Energy and Natural Resources Advis-ory Council (TENRAC).

Engler is studying how to process crude vegetable oils for fuel use. He also is studying which chemical and physical properties make the best fuel.

"We hope to find the processing steps that will make a high-quality substitute fuel," he said. Currently the research team is studying oil from sunflowers. They plan to move to other crops such as soybean, cottonseed and possibly animal fats.

Dr. Wayne LoPori, an agricultural engineer, is performing engine testing with oils prepared by Engler at the food protein center. Agricultural economists are studying feasibility of growing and processing vegetable oils for fuel.

If vegetable oil fuel ever becomes viable, Engler said, the exhaust will probably smell more like a deep-fat fryer than diesel.



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