

# PREDATOR FROM CHILE DEFEATS RED SPIDER

Control of glasshouse red spider mites in the cucumber houses of Joseph Rochford Ltd., Slough, is being successfully accomplished by means of a predator from Chile. The introduction of the predator--*Phytoseilus*--at Rochford's this year is the latest step in a program started by Dr. N. W. Hussey at the Glasshouse Crops Research Station last year. The early trials were so successful that they have now been expanded to controlled commercial trials.

The entomologists are satisfied that the predator can keep down red spider infestations. But they point out that there are still a number of difficulties.

All trials so far--including the present trial at Rochford's--have been supervised by trained entomologists who keep a careful watch on the buildup of red spider and introduce the predator at the right moment. In most cases, the predator dies out when its food supply is exhausted and it is reintroduced when the next build-up reaches a certain stage.

"Properly used, this system of spider control could solve this problem," said Mr. G. F. Sheard, a GCRI spokesman. "But before a grower can adopt it, he must have a knowledge of the habits of both the predator and the spider and know when to put the predator in."

The scientists do not think at the present time that it could become a proposition on a wide scale. They point out that it would require the full cooperation of the industry. One possibility that is being considered is that the predator could be supplied to growers who would then be "serviced" by local N.A.A.S. officers.