

## Space Age Insect Control

Various methods of sterilizing insects have been tried in recent years with rather promising results. In one large series of experiments, large populations of male insects were sterilized by gamma rays and released in several areas. All females mated with these sterile males produced infertile eggs and the population declined rapidly. This technique has worked on certain fruit flies and screw worm flies.

Word comes now through "Agricultural Research" that ARS entomologists have successfully used apholate, a chemical sterilant, on houseflies and boll weevils. Apholate inhibits egg development in the female housefly while it sterilizes the male boll weevil. Females that mate with the sterile males lay eggs that do not hatch, leading to gradual self destruction of the insect population.

These and other developments in biological control mark this as a major breakthrough in the scientific fight against insects.