

## ACTIVITIES IN MEMBER STATES

### "This Season's Program"

Suffolk Co. Mosq. Exterm. Com.  
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On April 15th, another season started for the Suffolk County Mosquito Extermination Commission. This year is the most important summer which the Commission has had to face on account of the conditions brought on by the world war. The local war which the Commission is waging against the Mosquito is only one cog in the great war machine. It is however, an important cog because of the concentration of camps and industries in Suffolk County.

There are two angles to the mosquito problem. One is the control of those insects which carry diseases - the most important in this community being "malaria". Although this disease is not prevalent at the present time the mosquitoes which carry it are present in considerable numbers. Malaria is conveyed by the mosquito from one victim to another and the movement of large numbers of workers and soldiers into the county from other sections, particularly the South, complicates the situation. The most prolific area for the breeding of malaria carrying mosquitoes is around Camp Upton and the Commission has employed large numbers of W.P.A. workers in this section all winter and will continue to do so all summer. The Commission believes that when the work in and around the camp is completed this section will be comparatively free from this type of mosquito as well as the other varieties significant for their annoyance.

The second angle is control of comfort disturbing mosquitoes. There are many different kinds and they breed in a great many different places from cesspools to sheltered accumulations of water in the woods. A large percentage of these mosquitoes can be dealt with directly by the Commission by means of its fighting equipment. But there is one brand known as the household mosquito, the control of which required the cooperation of every householder in the county. Residents are particularly urged to seal up cesspools so tightly that there is no opening of any kind into the pool. Another practice which produces considerable breeding and must be discontinued is the habit of throwing tin cans outside. If owners and tenants will observe these two suggestions, then, with the operations being carried out by the Commission, annoyance by household mosquitoes can be cut down to a minimum.

The mechanical equipment of the Commission consists of sixteen trucks and three boats and much miscellaneous small equipment. All this equipment goes into operation with full steam on the starting date. Eight of the sixteen trucks are known as Patrol Units. They carry the men, tools and supplies of larvicide from job to job. Each crew is in charge of a competent foreman. All of our foremen have been with us for years and are courteous, thoroughly trained and experienced. Each foreman has a definite section to patrol and is accountable for conditions in his particular district. By this means the salt marsh of the entire county is adequately covered. The workers do not have an easy time. Their work consists mostly of tramping over meadows, carrying heavy spray knapsacks on their backs and in order to reach each and every corner where breeding exists it is usually necessary to plod through mud, water and briars.

Four more trucks are tankers and carry larvicide to from 700 to 750 fresh water locations which require treatment. The number varies with the rainfall. Each tanker carries two men, 500 gallons of liquid and 500 feet of hose. In addition to the hose the nozzle will spray another 100 feet so that the equipment will cover considerable ground. Many of these locations are in places devastated by the hurricane and are still full of holes and fallen trees making treating operations difficult.

Two trucks are used to treat the 11,000 catch basins in the county. These catch basins furnish about 25% of the household mosquito population so that they are very important. Shelter Island has a unit all by itself. This unit treats both the salt marsh and the fresh water areas and the crew is responsible for conditions on the entire island. The 16th truck is a utility truck and is used for servicing the other units.

As for the boats, one operates out of Babylon and covers that area known as Fire Island Beach which contains acres and acres of meadowland. The captain who operates this boat is also the foreman and these crews carry out the same functions on the beach as the saltmarsh crews on the mainland. Another boat operates out of Brookhaven and covers in a similar manner that section known as Great South Beach. The third boat is a fast inspection cruiser and is used for the purpose of checking the progress of the work on the beaches and the islands in the Bay. The importance of beach control arises from the fact that the salt marsh mosquitoes can fly up to forty miles from their breeding place.

The foreman and drivers all report to two general foremen, and for the East end and one for the West end of the county. These General Foremen are responsible solely to the Director on whose shoulders rests the entire responsibility for the success of the season's work. Operation of the traps, analysis of the catch and other inspection work is in charge of the Chief Inspector. The Commission also maintains a competent Engineering crew in charge of a licensed Engineer. They are continually employed laying out ditches, giving grades and charting operations.

The Commission is well prepared and doing everything possible to bring about a successful 1942 season. The salt marsh ditches which were dug eight years ago are somewhat overgrown and outlets stopped up. The Commission has neither men, money nor machines to redig the ditches but feels that diligent treating operations will greatly reduce this handicap.