

PROGRESS REPORT FOR MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

P.W.Robbins 1/

During the past year Michigan State has revised the regulations covering the purchase and collection of forest tree seeds used in the production of forest planting stock at its Clarke-McNary tree nurseries. This measure will improve the quality and adaptability of the tree planting stock offered to Michigan tree growers.

The Dunbar Forest Experiment Station has completed the construction of a new conifer seed extraction plant. In the future, insofar as possible, all of the conifer tree seed for Michigan State's nurseries will be processed at the Dunbar Station plant.

The maple syrup investigations at Michigan State's East Lansing sugar bush continued for the third year the testing of the sugar content of maple sap (or sweet water) from 120 maple trees to select those maples which consistently produce high yields of sugar.

In 1955 a new 3-year project in cooperation with the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service, Philadelphia branch, was started at Michigan State University. This project, "Improvement of the Quality of Maple Sirup by Eliminating the Contamination of the Sap with Microorganisms and Their Metabolic (Fermentation) Products in the Tap Hole and During Storage," will endeavor to determine, among other things, if individual maple trees have a natural resistance to the development of microorganisms in and around the tap hole area. If individual trees which consistently produce high yields of sugar, 4 percent or better, are also found to resist contamination by microorganisms, such trees will be used in tree improvement projects to produce sugar maple planting stock.

Michigan State continued, during the past year, to establish test plantations of new available tree hybrids at the Fred Russ Forest near Casopolis, the W. K. Kellogg Forest near Augusta, the Dunbar Forest Experiment Station near Sault Ste. Marie, and the River Forest on the East Lansing campus.

The Forestry Department aided the members of a committee endeavoring to formulate a "Michigan Forest Tree Seed Law" which, it is hoped, will be introduced in the State Legislature and become a law of Michigan.

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1/ Associate Professor, Department of Forestry, Division of Conservation, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan. In Professor Robbins' absence the paper was read by F. J. Hodge of the Michigan Conservation Department.