

and efficient by this attitude of the farming community and the report bears ample evidence of the advantages that have accrued thereby. The record of the year's work justifies the high reputation which the Canadian

Department of Agriculture enjoys for the efficiency and diversity of its services.

A. K. Y.

NEWS

LIVING INSECTICIDES

... "Although many people, especially in the West, feel a high degree of revulsion towards spiders and may in fact be frightened of them. In some areas of the world they may actively encourage spiders to enter their homes or may even take them in themselves. The houses in villages in certain areas of the Sierras in the state of Michoacán, in Mexico, suffer invasions by huge swarms of flies which congregate in them during the rainy season. To rid themselves of this nuisance, the villagers employ a novel form of biological control. In the mountains near the villages, many of the trees are covered with the massed webs of the communal cribellate spider, *Mallos gregalis*, whose local name is the mosquero. The webs of these spiders may clothe a

whole tree, so the locals just cut off a handy-sized branch, which is taken home and hung from the ceiling. The swarming flies land on the sticky threads and become ensnared, whereupon they are removed and eaten by the web's occupants. Such a practical use of spiders to control an insect pest, which in addition to being a nuisance, may also spread disease, is admirable but alas rather rare."

[Rod Preston-Mafham & Ken Preston-Mafham in *Spiders of the World*. New York: Facts on File, 1984. 191 p. Reproduced with permission from Press Digest, *Current Contents*®, No. 6, February 11, 1985, p. 14. (Published by the Institute for Scientific Information®, Philadelphia, PA, USA.)]

FATTER MAY BE BETTER

... "A new study . . . maintains that it is all right for you to get fatter as you grow older. In fact, it says, you will live longer if you do. . . . If one looks at *age* as well as height and weight when computing the best weight for lowest mortality, [reports Reubin Andres, Natl. Inst. on Aging], then it is clear that the logical course is to start on the thin side in youth and get fatter with increasing years (which is the path most Americans follow, with guilt). Based on Andres' computations, the longest-lived person would generally be the one who gains about 10 pounds per decade from his or her late 20s on. . . . 'He's crazy,' said

William Castelli, director of the long-running Framingham (Mass.) Heart Study and a past critic of Andres' fatter-is-better ideas. 'Our data [from the Framingham study] says that if you gain weight it's one of the worst risk factors. . . . What you find is when people gain weight their cardiovascular [disease] and death rates jump up.'"

[Fawn Vrazo in *Philadelphia Inquirer* 26 Oct. 84, p. 1-C, 7-C Reproduced with permission from Press Digest, *Current Contents*®, No. 2 January 14, 1985, p. 13. (Published by the Institute for Scientific Information®, Philadelphia, PA, USA.)]
