

Vacuum Cleaner Trees

By A. Priel
Translated by Ronald Besford

Of 1,700 different types of trees that Prof. Israel Gindel has tried to grow in Israel, 300 are now thriving without irrigation. Some have been found to be suitable for the timber industry and other commercial uses.

Prof. Gindel, a well-known forest engineer who has specialized in cultivating trees that will grow in the desert, immigrated to Israel from the Ukraine in 1935. One of his avowed aims in life is to combine the beautiful with the useful.

Recently, Prof. Gindel completed a comprehensive research project which found that 12 types of trees growing in Israel act as natural absorbers of air pollution caused by heavy industry, power stations and motor vehicles. "Air pollution is a serious health hazard,

especially to people living in proximity to factories and busy traffic routes. Pollution is not only injurious to health, but also damages fruit trees, flowers, grass and vegetable gardens," Gindel said.

Some of the trees which absorb pollution are Kermes Oak, Terebinth, Latisk, Phillyres, Olive, Carob and Blue Acacia. It is still not completely understood how the absorption process works, except that the pollutants in the air are absorbed through the leaves and somehow are utilized for the physiological needs of the trees. The research showed that despite the large amount of pollution the trees were exposed to, they flourished and remained green.

Prof. Gindel recommends planting the trees close to homes situated near factories, and around the factories themselves, to act as a natural vacuum cleaner which would absorb the poisons released into the air. Two or three rows of trees in proximity to homes would not only help prevent damage caused by pollution, but would also improve the land-

scape. Prof. Gindel suggests that the electric company which is building a new power station near Hedera should plant trees around the station. Even if the smokestacks are higher than the trees, many of the poisonous elements would drift down and be taken in by the trees.

The dozen types of trees which absorb pollution can make a very real contribution to the quality of life in Israel if they are planted in suitable locations. As Israeli society becomes more industrialized, there is increasing need to control air pollution. What better remedy than one that is both functional and beautiful.

NEW YORK -- The United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit has ruled that the government was wrong in rejecting a request by the American Jewish Congress to examine reports on compliance with the Arab boycott filed under the Export Administration Act of 1969 meaning that thousands of reports on participation in the Arab boycott between 1969 and 1976 will become available for public inspection.

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