

Pass the fiddleheads, please

Fiddlehead greens, the rare and delicious vegetable harvested only along the banks of the Matapedia and Restigouche rivers in the province of New Brunswick, is making new—and influential—friends in the United States.

It was even served at the State Dinner in San Francisco last fall given by President Nixon in honor of the President of South Korea.

the curled up fronds of the ostrich fern. They are harvested along low-lying river banks in the maritime province of New Brunswick mainly by members of the Micmac and Maliseet Indian tribes who sell them to processors such as McCain Foods, Ltd., of Florenceville, N. B., the main exporter of fiddleheads to the U.S.

A frozen package that serves four persons costs about \$1.40 and the de-



Gourmets swear fiddlehead greens taste something like asparagus and mushrooms, only better. In appearance it is a graceful green spiral about as long as a man's thumb, and resembles the head of a violin.

Botanically, fiddlehead greens are

mand exceeds the supply, most of it earmarked for the U.S. market.

The proper name for the newly popular vegetable is "pteretis nodulosa" and Canadian chefs say they taste best when barely boiled and served with venison and roast beef. 

Foam insulator for crops may solve pesticide problems

A foam insulator developed by Canada's Dept. of Agriculture to protect fruits and vegetables from frost damage may solve the pollution problem of drifting pesticides.

The foam, which is cheap and harmless to the most delicate plants, provides a blanket of warmth to delicate crops. It can be applied to 20 acres in nine hours, and disappears within 48 hours.

The foam, already in use in Canada and in Florida, Texas and other states as far north as Wisconsin and Massachusetts, has the consistency of rich shaving lather or whipped cream. When it dissipates, it fluffs up like suds and either vanishes like broken soap bubbles or floats away like an errant balloon.

A 1½ inch blanket of foam for seedling tomato plants costs about \$25 an acre; for bigger, transplanted tomatoes (eight to 10 inches tall) the cost is about \$35 an acre. Costs depend on the thickness of the foam blanket and the width of the strip being laid down.

Canadian scientists are investigating the possibility that the same general idea can be used to apply pesticides. The advantages: an end to problems of drift, the possibility that a foam could add a slow-release feature and the fact that foam-carried pesticides can be applied more evenly. 

