



BROADCASTING ANT BAIT PRODUCTS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED MOBILITY OR IN ROUGH TERRAIN

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Ant bait products, unlike granular insecticides in which ingredients kill ants on contact, contain a “carrier” (usually de-fatted, processed corn grit), and an attractant (usually soybean oil) in which the active ingredient is dissolved. They are best used by scattering them around individual ant hills or mounds, or in heavily-infested areas (with 5 or more fire ant mounds per 1/4 acre yard), evenly broadcast the bait over the entire area. Foraging worker ants find the bait particles and either carry them back to the nest or “sip” off the insecticide-containing oil. Follow the “broadcast” instructions as stated on the label of the fire ant bait product. Most product labels instruct the user to apply the bait at a rate of 1 to 1 ½ pounds per acre (see [FAPFS027](#), “Calculating Areas for Pesticide Treatment Around the Home”)

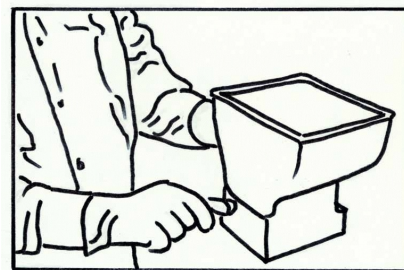


Figure 1. Broadcast spreader

How, then, does one go about broadcasting such a small amount of product over the entire yard? Usually this can be done quickly using a hand-held, crank-type spreader available at most garden centers. These devices apply a 10 to 12 foot swath. **With the opening at the bottom of the seeder set as small an opening as possible to still allow bait particles to drop out** (about 3/16 inch), the person making the application must walk rather quickly to accomplish this task (see [B-6043](#) for more details).

Unfortunately, some areas requiring treatment are in rough terrain, may be steep, or have obstacles such as prickly pear clumps. In addition, some elderly or disabled individuals with limited mobility may not be able to walk fast enough or long enough to broadcast the product to the entire area. This fact sheet describes a technique whereby a person can accomplish this task without having to walk swaths rapidly.



Figure 2. Broadcasting with spreader.

The Stationary (“Pirouette”) Method for Broadcasting Bait:

1. Determine how far the spreader will apply bait. Most will broadcast particles about 10 to 12 feet.
2. Stand in one spot at the a half swath-width (5 to 6 ft.) away in the middle of the 12 foot area to be treated. Broadcast the bait while turning around on that spot or make a quarter-of-a-turn between cranking the spreader.

Figure 3. Turning a full circle broadcasting bait using the stationary method and then walking to the next spot.



3. After turning a full circle, move to the next spot, which should be slightly less than one swath-width (10 to 12 ft.) from the first.
4. Repeat until the entire area has received bait, producing a pattern which approaches that in **Figure 4**.

If you did not apply enough volume of bait product during the first set of stops, repeat the process to “touch up” areas missed or repeat stops. Use entire volume of bait required but avoid over-treating. Always use fresh bait and apply when ants are actively foraging (looking for food).

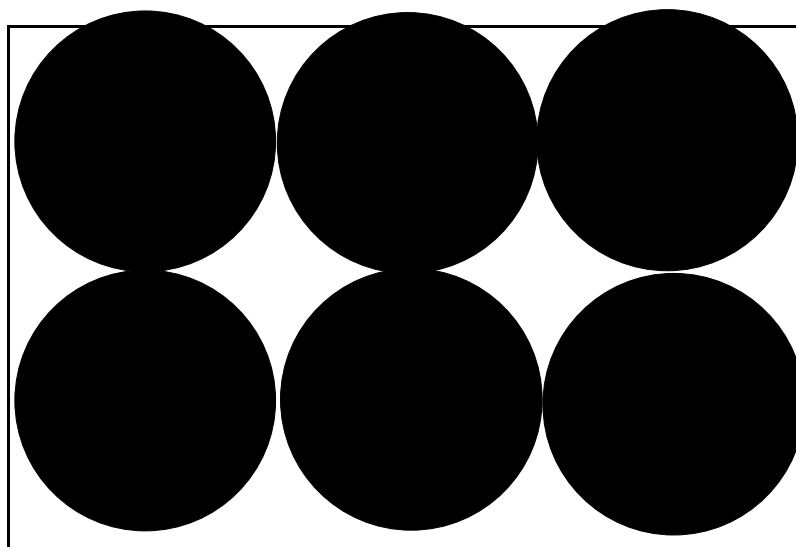


Figure 4. Broadcast bait pattern using stationary technique.

For more information regarding fire ant management, see Extension publications [B-6043](#), *Managing Red Imported Fire Ants in Urban Areas*; [SP-196](#), *Management of Imported Fire Ants in Cattle Production Systems*; [B-6099](#), *Broadcast Baits for Fire Ant Control*; or [L-5070](#) *The Texas Two-Step Method Do-It-Yourself Fire Ant Control for Homes and Neighborhoods*. Also visit our web site at <http://fireant.tamu.edu>.

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