



Fire Ant UPDATE: News from the

Texas Applied Fire Ant Research and Education Program

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Extinguish® Plus Released for Spring 2004; Amdro® Pro “Hopper Blend” Instructions Provided for Use in Pasture and Range Lands

The combination of a faster-acting metaboloc inhibitor plus a slower-but-longer acting insect growth regulator (IGR) bait product, applied at half rates of each, has been demonstrated to provide a performance profile that is faster and longer lasting than either product applied individually at full rate (see Fire Ant Trails 5(2), 2001, on <http://fireant.tamu.edu>). This concept led to a 24© registration for the blending of hydramethylnon bait (Amdro® Pro or Siege® Pro) plus methoprene (Extinguish®) for 2002 and 2003.

Wellmark International will be releasing **Extinguish® Plus** in 2004 as a pre-blended product containing 0.365% hydramethylnon and 0.250% s-methoprene (see product label, [ExtinguishPlusFnl.Spec.Lbl.pdf](#)). The broadcast application rate for imported fire ants is 1.5 lbs. product per acre. Since no mixing is required, this product will be easier and more convenient to apply. It is registered for use in residential and commercial property, container or nursery stock, sod farms and commercial turf, landscape areas, golf courses, and other non-cropland areas such as airports, roadsides, cemeteries, commercial grounds, parks, kennels, school grounds, athletic fields, camgrounds, and other recreational areas, as well as grounds surrounding poultry houses (excluding runs and ranges), or corrals and other animal holding areas.

Unfortunately, the new product is not registered for application to pasture and range land. However, this use is covered by both a Supplemental label from Wellmark International and it is now included on the “new” 2003 **Amdro® Pro Fire Ant Bait** label (see product label, <http://www.cdms.net/manuf/1prod.asp?pd=4236&lc=2>). Directions allow Amdro Pro to be blended with Extinguish at a rate of 0.75 pound of each product applied at 1.5 lbs. of the blend per acre. In Texas and most other southeastern United States, this blend of products can be applied to non-agricultural lands and grass forage (pasture and rangeland).

Herd Seeder Company Introduces Air-Assisted Modification of GT-77 Model Seeder for Applying Fire Ant Bait Products

David Herd, President of Herd Seeder Company, Inc. (P.O. Box 448, Logansport, Indiana 46947-0448; 219/753-6311 info@herdseeder.com), traveled to College Station, Texas, on September 23, 2003, to demonstrate a new air assisted version of the only available applicator suitable for broadcast-applying imported fire ant bait products, the GT-77 model Herd Seeder. There was some excitement to this visit, however, because substantial modifications had been

made to the original design: it had been converted to an air-assisted directional applicator or a “bait blower.” The company plans to market this new product line within the coming year directly from the company. See pictures: [HerdGT77Modified01](#), [HerdGT77Modified02](#), [HerdGT77Modified03](#), [HerdGT77Modified04](#).

This new development is actually a combination of an Echo® leaf blower, that employs a small gasoline-powered engine and a conventional GT-77 model Herd Seeder in such a way that the airstream generated by the leaf blower is directed into a directional shoot. The blower produces an airstream of 150 miles per hour. The metering plate supplied with the seeder has holes that are pre-calibrated to allow the vehicle driver to apply the right amount of bait product being used. The seeder and blower are both affixed to a swivel mounting structure that allows the user to direct application to either side of the vehicle to avoid application to roadways. It can apply the correct rate of product traveling up to 20 miles per hour for large-scale treatments.

By dismantling the component parts, the user can continue to benefit from traditional uses of both the seeder and the blower. In addition, people who already own a GT-77 model seeder only need to purchase additional component parts to convert to the bait blower.

The GT-77 model seeder alone applied the recommended amount of ant bait product per acre at a moderate 7 to 10 mile an hour speed. It produces a 20 ft. wide swath from the center, which is ideal for applications to pastureland, sod farms, golf courses, large landscapes and park land. However, when applying from roadways or “cuts” in containerized nursery operations, would apply a lot of bait material to the roadways. The new design dramatically increases rate of application and swath width, thereby reducing treatment time necessary to treat larger areas.

This development was initiated by pioneering work conducted by Dr. Charles Coble, Agricultural Engineer at Texas A&M University. Dr. Coble had developed a prototype truck-mounted industrial ant bait applicator, with support from the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDoT) and the Texas Imported Fire Ant Research & Management Project. This device was designed to be capable of applying the recommended rate of ant bait (1 to 1.5 lbs. product per acre) to the side of the vehicle while traveling up to 30 miles per hour. Swath width varied with wind direction but ranged from a maximum of 30 to 50 feet. TXDoT had commissioned the development of the prototype as a possible method of rapidly treating roadsides, rest stops and right of ways for fire ant control (Drees, B. M. and R. E. Frisbie. 2002. Overview of the Texas Imported Fire Ant Research and Management Project (B. M. Drees, ed.). Southwestern Entomologist Supplement No. 25:1-6.).

The prototype blower was demonstrated in the fall of 2000, when 50 acres of Magnolia Gardens Nursery in Montgomery County was treated within two hours. The nursery's blocks of containerized ornamental crops could be treated from the roadways through the nursery without applying bait to the roads themselves. It was also used to treat the Lago Santa Fe 80-acre subdivision in Galveston County in April, 2002. In addition to use for treating right of ways, commercial nurseries and residential areas, this new modification may increase the likelihood of large-scale ant management by municipalities in fire ant abatement programs and other forms of community-wide fire ant management programs.

Reports of development and demonstration of the prototype bait blower device at Texas A&M University can be found on the web site, <http://fireant.tamu.edu/research/arr/year/00-02/2000-2002ResDemHbk.htm#blower> .

Fire Ant Web site Statistics for 2003

In 2003, the web site, <http://fireant.tamu.edu> received 6,180, 770 “hits”, doubling the total from 2002 (3,488,442). Unlike previous years, however, when graphics were most popular downloads, fact sheets (particularly FAPFS010, 012, 013, 022, 023, 204, 039, 010) were among the most visited!

USDA-APHIS Issues Alert for Fire Ants in Pine Straw

For “Pine straw retailers protect your employees and customers”, see http://www.aphis.usda.gov/oa/pubs/ia_pinestraw.html



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