

INSECTS

Two new products for fire ant infestations

Two new products for control of the dangerous fire ant hit the market last summer, Logic fire ant bait from PBI/Gordon and Affirm fire ant bait from Merck.

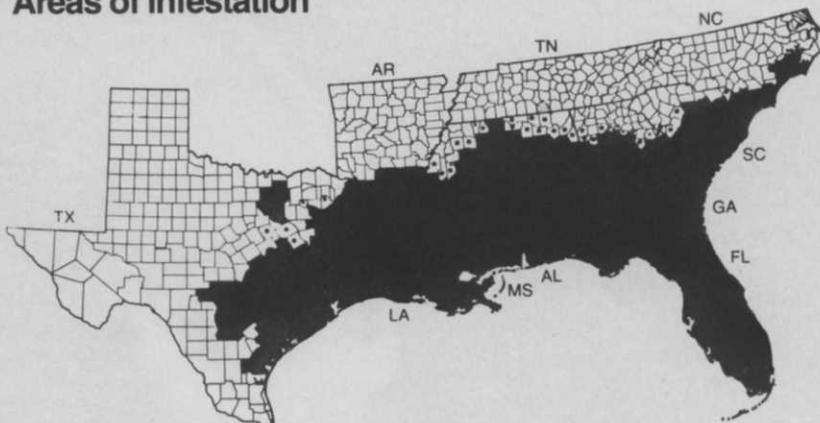
Fire ants, named for the burning sensation of their stings, are a growing problem across the southern part of the United States. They are potentially fatal to about one percent of the population. Invaders from Brazil, fire ants have spread over 270 million acres since their first appearance 50 years ago in Mobile, Ala.

Logic's active ingredient is fenoxycarb, an insect growth regulator. Test results show that newly-hatched winged female fire ants are completely sterile because of the effects of Logic, a granular bait. These young queens are the ants that could potentially mate and start new colonies. Logic also stops the development of the fire ant brood, preventing young larvae from becoming adult worker ants.

Logic is available to landscape managers through PBI/Gordon, Kansas City, Mo. (phone 816-421-4070).

Affirm is a bait derived from a natural soil microorganism. When worker ants feed it to fire ant queens, Affirm stops them from laying eggs. It is also toxic to the workers. Active

Imported Fire Ant Areas of Infestation



ingredient is abamectin.

Affirm is marketed more toward the homeowner market, though it is available to the landscape manager through the Rigo Company, Buckner, Ky. (502-222-1456) and Security Lawn & Garden Products, Ft. Valley, Ga. (912-825-5511).

"The product received kind of a late start last year," says George Gosen, director of agricultural products for MSD Agvet, a division of Merck. "We expect a lot more use of the compound in 1988 and beyond."



Fire ant queen surrounded by workers.

INSECTS

Insects become opportunists when attacking plants, trees

Weak, improperly-cared-for trees and other plants are the most likely targets of insect infestations, says Dave Nielson, Ph.D. at Ohio State University's Agricultural Research and Development Center in Wooster.



Neilson

Nielson told landscape managers at the Pro Show in Dallas that getting rid of these pests could be a problem, but not just because of resilient bugs.

He cited concerns about liabilities associated with using pesticides in landscape management, the availability and cost of liability insurance, and government restrictions on chemical use in the marketplace.

Much of this can be avoided, he says, by properly caring for the tree from the beginning, "contributing to natural resistance."

Important among the contributors are site quality, superior planting stock and systemic tree health care. "Work with architects for proper planting sites," he suggests.

To match a tree to a site, he makes these considerations: exposure, drainage, traffic, fruiting, form, space and soil type.

Adequate supplies of clean air, moisture and sunlight above ground, and water, oxygen and nutrients below ground are essential. He suggests aerifying to a depth of 16 to 18 inches to keep a sufficient oxygen supply near the roots.

"The most important part of tree health care is the client," he adds.

ASSOCIATIONS

Ciba-Geigy donates \$50,000 to GCSAA

A \$50,000 contribution to the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America has been received from Ciba-Geigy.

The Robert Trent Jones Sr. Endowment Fund, established by the GCSAA last August, makes scholarships available to outstanding students in collegiate turfgrass management programs across the country. The fund encourages future leaders among golf course superintendents.

"We're pleased and excited about the opportunity to make a significant contribution to the endowment fund," says Bill Liles, director of Ciba-Geigy's Turf and Ornamental Department. "Furthering turf research through scholarships is an excellent example of industry, education and the GCSAA working together."

SHORT CUTS

Work closely with the client to gain an understanding of the tree's needs. He also believes in charging for a tree survey or inventory (this is a business, after all).

Trees and their caretakers have to deal with a myriad of insects. Nielsen says a healthy plant will go a long way toward reducing the need for major tree repair and pesticide applications: quality plants, not pest control.

ATHLETIC TURF

Artificial turf injuries appear to be on the rise

Artificial turf is hurting athletes, say an overwhelming number of college athletic directors. The athletic directors, from schools in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), cited increased injuries to knees, ankles and elbows as the main reason they preferred natural fields.

Of the 177 who responded, almost 68 percent opposed synthetic surfaces. That included some Division 1A schools which currently have artificial fields. Only 23 percent support artificial turf, while the others are undecided.

BASF Corporation Fibers Division sponsored the survey. Respondents averaged more than 21 years experience in coaching and athletic administration.

More than half of the respondents, 53.1 percent, see a trend back to natural fields.

Comments from respondents characterized artificial surfaces as "too hard," "abrasive," with no give. Besides knee, ankle and elbow injuries, burns and contusions also topped the list.

An athletic director at a Division 1AA school in Illinois agrees "totally with our players and coaches that the injury situation is considerably worse when we play on artificial turf. If the players and coaches have their way, we will soon have all natural fields again."

Several coaches, however, favored synthetic turf. One service academy official said, "The main problem is footwear, not the turf." A Division III administrator said, "Our players learned to fall and run appropriately on the artificial surface."

Despite the controversy, some schools take a pragmatic approach to the matter. "Our coaches want to practice on natural grass," one administrator reported, "but play games on artificial."

For more information on athletic field safety and care, reprints of "Sideline" and "Hard Knocks" from

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WELL-READ... Maria Cinque, horticultural extension agent for Long Island, N.Y., is becoming somewhat famous along the eastern seaboard. Cinque, since last April, has been writing a weekly column in the Sunday editions of *Newsday*. She also writes for the New York editions of the same newspaper. The papers have a combined circulation of more than one million readers. "These columns give the general public a constant in horticultural information," Cinque says.

IMPRESSIVE PRESS... Robert Dedman of the Club Corp. of America recently received national attention, along with William Kubley of Landscapes Unlimited. Dedman, who founded Club Corp., was written up in the Dec. 14th issue of *Forbes* magazine. "Even before it turns profitable, a Dedman club can be a cash machine," *Forbes* said. Kubly, owner of Landscapes Unlimited of Lincoln, Neb., received a write-up in *Inc.* magazine for being the 441st fastest-growing entrepreneur in the country. Minors Lawn Care of Fort Worth, Tex. was No. 446 and Suburban Landscape of Davenport, Ia. was No. 447 on *Inc.*'s list of the top 500.

A WORLD RECORD... Briggs & Stratton, the world's leading manufacturer of small gasoline engines, has made the Guinness Book of World Records. The first product ever produced by the company from 1920 to 1923, a buckboard-like car called the Flyer, was named the most inexpensive mass-produced road car in history. The nationally-syndicated television show "Guinness Book of World Records," which was scheduled to air in mid-January, was to highlight the car. The Flyer sold for \$145 to \$225, according to George Thompson III of Briggs & Stratton. Only about 2,000 of the Flyers were manufactured, though.

RESTLESS NATIVES... ANVIL (Association for the use of Native Vegetation in Landscapes) received time on the Voice of America. Roger Lemke of LaFayette Home Nursery near Chicago invited a reporter to see the prairie growing in his yard. "I had to be careful," Lemke says. "I had to make sure I referred to aggressive weeds instead of Eurasian weeds."

GETTING INTO CONDITION... Seed companies no longer clean turfseed. But that doesn't mean you'll see a lot of weeds in the next lawn you seed. To get around (or, is it cooperate with?) the EPA, seed companies now refer to seed cleaning as *conditioning*. But, says Jerry Pepin, Ph.D., of Pickseed West, the seed still meets quality standards.

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LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT are available for \$8 by calling (216) 826-2839. Proceeds go to the National Sports Turf Council.

PESTICIDES

Australian brings U.S. a new word

Peter R. Meadows, in an address to the National Pest Control Association, coined a new word. The word? "Toxoterrorist."

The word, Meadows says, is derived from book "Toxic Terror" by Dr. Elizabeth Whelan. Whelan was a keynoter at the 1986 Professional Lawn Care Association's conference.

Meadows is group technical sales manager for W.A. Flick & Co. and vice-president of the Council of Australian Pest Control Association.

"We have decided (in Australia) that it is time that we attacked," Meadows said. "As long as we allow the public to judge us on the strength of debate between 'environmentalists' and 'pest exterminators,' we have lost every debate before we start.

"But if we change the debate to one between 'toxoterrorists' and 'environmental managers,' what a different picture that can create in the minds of listeners!"

Meadows said that the toxic terrorists do not know how to defend themselves.

"Senior government officers, who in the past have been very careful in what they say about these people, are now finding that 'toxoterrorism' has a nice way of rolling off their tongues and they are using it with increasing frequency."

Meadows concluded by issuing a challenge to his fellow pesticide applicators in America:

"Ladies and gentlemen, we bring you this word to add to your language. We dare you to use it. Leave the black magic to the toxoterrorists. They will, with our help, eventually become entangled in their own web of deceit."

BUSINESS

Foiling lawsuits with a few tricks

Landscape, lawn care and tree companies should incorporate every truck individually, says attorney Richard Jack of Athens, Ga. Jack says that such a tactic will protect the company from paralyzing lawsuits.

"Most large cab companies incorporate cabs individually," Jack says. That way, Jack explains, a person can sue for only the worth of the truck that committed the wrong, not the entire corporation. "If you have a major liability source, cut it away from your corporation," Jack says. "Take your assets out of the corporation. Never travel under your own hat. Always travel under the corporation's hat."

In order to meet all the rules of a corporation, Jack says you must remember to file an annual report and have a meeting with the board of directors. "That means you have to meet with yourself," he says.

Another way to guard against lawsuits is to not modify equipment on your own. "If you go out and build equipment, you're the manufacturer," Jack warns. "If you're a dealer, get the manufacturer to do it."

Also, make sure equipment isn't worn. "Worn equipment will get you into trouble because you know better," Jack says. "Even by attending trade shows, you're held to a higher standard."

Jack spoke at the Pro Show in Dallas, Texas.

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SEED

1988-89 seed crop looks on bleak side

The extended drought in the Pacific Northwest last fall may have damaged the seed crop. "The groundwork for 1988 has already been laid and it doesn't look very good," says Jerry Pepin, Ph.D., of Pickseed West.

The Kentucky bluegrass crop, however, will be slightly improved, according to Pepin. "A year ago crops were terrible. This year they will be tight," he says. "The crop should be healthy, but the demand is unprecedented. Prices will be high, and better varieties will be limited."

The bentgrass crop may be slightly improved, but demand will keep prices high. "There's a lot more use on fairways in the North," Pepin says. "And it's being used for overseeding in the South."

Pepin estimates fine fescue supplies to be adequate, despite a decrease in growing acres. "For low-maintenance or shade tolerance, fine fescues can't be beat," he says. "Prices will be firm."

Supplies of perennial ryegrass and turf-type tall fescue will be short. "Use of perennial ryegrass is higher

than it's ever been," Pepin says. Despite the fact that seed companies produce more than 50 million pounds annually, increased use on fairways and home lawns will keep supply low and prices high.

Tall fescues are in demand because of their drought tolerance. "The dwarf-type varieties will be the wave of the future," Pepin says.

Pepin recommended buying seed early in the spring, especially if you want a specific variety. He spoke at the North Central Turfgrass Conference in St. Charles, Ill.

PEOPLE

Ohio State's Buscher retires to Wooster

Fred K. Buscher has retired from The Ohio State University's horticulture department, effective last summer.

Buscher, Ph.D., retired as Professor of Horticulture Emeritus. As a district specialist in landscape horticulture, he had developed and conducted a series of five landscape design short courses, the Northeast Ohio Horticultural Trade Shows and the Nursery Field Days. Buscher will remain active in the nursery industry and reside in Wooster, Ohio.

Thomas W. Hofer has been named president of Spring-Green Lawn Care, Plainfield, Ill. Hofer's appointment was made by William Fischer, who died Jan. 7 of pancreatic cancer at the age of 41. The appointment is a rare accomplishment in the franchise industry: he has risen to the top spot in the company after having been one of Spring-Green's first franchisees from 1977 to 1980.



Hofer

INDUSTRY

Landscape Management an Edgell magazine

Ownership of LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT and 109 other titles changed hands Jan. 1, 1988. LM, formerly an HBJ publication, is now owned by Edgell Communications Inc. of Cleveland, Ohio.

An investor group led by Robert L. Edgell purchased HBJ Publications and HBJ Beckley Cardy for \$334 million. Edgell, 65, headed HBJ Publications for nearly 20 years.

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