

The Merits of Merit

We are thinking of using Merit insecticide for grub control. Our question is, how late in the season can we use it? Secondly, how critical is post-watering? Many clients don't water as they are instructed, so what should we expect?

—PENNSYLVANIA

A representative from Bayer suggests that Merit can be applied from late July through mid-August—with irrigation or post-watering. Products such as Dylox, Triumph or Oftanol can be used after August 15th.

If the treated area cannot be watered or irrigated after treatments, Bayer representatives suggest applying the product during early spring to early summer, as the results depend on the amount of rainfall received.

Merit is a good product, like many other insecticides. Most products, however, require post-watering to move the product from the turfgrass surface to the thatch/soil interface area where grubs feed. Without water, the results may vary.

Read and follow label specifications for best results.

Treating fireblight

Mountain ash plants in some of our clients' properties are not looking good. Some terminal branches with discolored leaves are dying back. On some branches, leaves were completely eaten by some insects, but there are no insects now. Any idea on the problems and how to control them?

—NEW YORK

Meals for mealys

We maintain a number of large commercial properties that have many annual and perennial flowering plants. Some, like impatiens, coleus and other succulents, have insect problems. The insects are white in color and generally found in the area where the leaves are attached to the plant. What are these, and how can we get rid of them?

—NEW JERSEY

From your description, they appear to be related to an insect called mealy bug. These insects are white, have a woolly cover and appear at the nodal region (where leaves are attached to the stem). They are soft and generally hidden from bright sunlight.

While feeding, these insects suck the plant sap and secrete honeydew from their last body segments (read end). This honeydew is sticky and can support a secondary fungi called sooty mold.

Sooty mold is black and grows on leaves using the sugar from the honeydew. The mold indirectly affects the overall health of plants by reducing sunlight.

To manage mealy bugs, consider using an insecticide such as Tempo or Dursban. Start treating when you see the insect and repeat as necessary.

Read and follow label specifications for best results. **LM**



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SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO:

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Please allow two to three months for an answer to appear in the magazine.