

WHITMIRE MICRO-GEN
PRESCRIPTION TREATMENT®

PT Quarterly

VOLUME 23 • NUMBER 2 • APRIL 2004

protect thy home
INSIDE
and **OUT**



WHITMIRE MICRO-GEN
Prescription Treatment

Making pest management more profitable.

CONTENTS

FEATURES:

Quarterly Baiting Adds New Value For Your Customers	3
Termite Bait Pre-Treats: New Opportunities Abound	5
Closing Termite Work With A Quality Bait	8
Prescription Treatment® Termite Monitoring	10
Introducing PT®250 Propoxur Residual Aerosol	11
Cy-Kick®CS and Cool Cap Technology	12
Using Granular Baits For Ant Control	14
Pest Control in Mexico: Growing Stronger	16

DEPARTMENTS:

Termite Training Tools	6
Termite Monitoring Products	7

www.advancetbs.com

Visit Whitmire Micro-Gen's new dynamic and educational website for the Advance® Termite Bait System: www.advancetbs.com.



- View the Advance product story video
- Review data from top universities
- Order Advance literature and videos
- Download literature and training collateral
- Ask technical questions
- Learn about software options for Advance

Prescription Treatment® Quarterly

is published by
Whitmire Micro-Gen
Research Laboratories Inc.

Whitmire Micro-Gen is one of the leading manufacturers and suppliers of general insect and termite control products to the professional pest management industry in the U.S. Whitmire Micro-Gen specializes in the manufacture of aerosols and baits for insect control and develops unique and environmentally friendly fly control equipment.

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For PT® Quarterly on-line, check out www.wmmg.com. You can SEARCH for features on various topics.

Quarterly Baiting Adds New Value for Your Customers

With quarterly baiting, PMPs have more time to increase business. By Jeff Vannoy

With the recent launch of Whitmire Micro-Gen's new Advance™ termite bait system, there are many PMPs asking, "How do I redirect my technicians to other valuable work since they are no longer checking bait stations on a monthly basis?"

As you transition your business from a monthly bait label product to a quarterly bait label product like Advance, your technicians can now service more accounts than in the past. To be exact, for every new Advance termite bait system installation there are typically two less visits per quarter than with your previous monthly system during the first year. Great

news, but what should your technicians do with the extra time?

Extra Service Time

The first area to look at is your existing customer base. Ask yourself, "How happy are my current customers with my level of service?" If they could be happier, look at spending a few more minutes on the job for added value. This can be done in many ways:

- Survey conducive conditions around the structure.
- Develop a short form with checkboxes to let the homeowner know that you are looking at more than just their stations.



This allows them to correct these conducive conditions which may make termite control easier.

Let Neighbors Know

Another valuable way to deploy labor is to inform other homeowners that you service a home in their area for termite control. This can be done with door hangers that identify your company and perhaps generate a new lead for your business. Reward the technician with a flat fee every time a customer buys a service from one of the door hangers. This motivates the technician and creates new lead opportunities for your business.

Universal Technician

An emerging trend in the industry, is the “universal technician concept,” recently covered in the November issue of PCT magazine. Many companies are attempting to cross-train and cross-sell current termite bait customers for both services in one visit. The biggest constraint has been monthly bait systems not matching the quarterly route schedule for GIC (general insect control). With the availability of the new Advance quarterly bait system, PMPs can seriously evaluate doing perimeter treatments and other GIC services along with bait station monitoring.

What does this mean? You cut your visits from eight (general insect and termite baiting) to only four. You can also provide a deeper level of service for the homeowner and extract more profit per account. Both the homeowner and the PMP win. Plus, you can sell a package renewal to the homeowner for both services. There is no disputing that this takes significant cross-training, however, you can now reward a technician with higher pay due to fewer stops per day. A technician could make significantly more income per stop and so could you. The homeowner will appreciate a slight discount for buying both services in a package. Everyone involved wins.

In conclusion, there are many creative ideas to raise the quality of service and efficiency of your business with the onset of a quarterly bait system like the Advance termite bait system. You should evaluate your particular area of the country, as there are regional differences in expectations, etc. Your best referral is from current, happy customers, so always look there first as you evaluate how to re-allocate time and add new services for your clients. ❧

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Jeff Vannoy is termite marketing manager for Whitmire Micro-Gen.



Termite Bait Pre-Treats: New Opportunities Abound

Years ago, if you were asked if termite baits would be used as pre-treatment, what would you have said? By Jeff Vannoy

Termite baits were viewed as only a tool for homes with active infestations. After the past decade of success with termite baits, many PMPs are now turning to termite baits for pre-treats.

In the past five years, many building codes and states have accepted baits for pre-treats. This has caused a surge in PMPs presenting termite baits to builders as an option for new construction. Builders have quickly accepted termite baits as a good alternative to the older more disruptive approaches to treating new construction.

Builders appreciate several aspects of termite baits when used on new construction sites. First, they like the fact that the stations are installed after the final grade is completed. Therefore, the treatment is less likely to be disruptive than with liquid barrier treatments. Second, one of the biggest challenges with pre-treats for builders is the soil disruption that is necessary for liquid treatments under slabs that affects the leveling process done before the slab is poured. This is an extremely contentious issue for both PMPs who want to do the job right and the builder who paid to level the soil. Finally, builders like the fact they don't have to wait for a PMP to treat the slab area before they pour the concrete. Every PMP has a story about how they were called in literally minutes before the concrete truck was ready to pour. This is both stressful for the technician and generally does not lead to the highest quality work.

From a PMP's perspective, there are two key considerations in deciding to use a bait on preconstruction homes. First, have you charged the builder enough in year one to cover the costs of a baiting system? Whitmire Micro-Gen's Advance™ termite bait system has low upfront costs for stations, and you purchase the bait as needed. Other site license programs sometimes load more costs up front to the PMPs. The most critical component is the labor cost during the first year and subsequent years. Can you afford to check stations monthly? Whitmire Micro-Gen has solved this issue by introducing its quarterly label with the Advance termite bait system. Thus, you know up front



Formosan subterranean termites. Photo: Scott Bauer/ARS/USDA.

what your labor costs will be for servicing the treated home.

How will the homeowners feel when they move in and find plastic stations around their home? Research has shown that homeowners view baits as positive. They see them as visible protection and feel secure that the PMP checks the stations regularly. Most homeowners understand the incremental value of quarterly station checks vs. a once-a-year check traditionally done with liquid products. As with any service you offer, consumers respond differently based on income level. Starter neighborhoods probably will not be the best avenue for you to achieve 60-80% retention of annual renewals with a termite bait. Households with incomes of more than \$75,000 per year typically respond best to a termite bait offering.

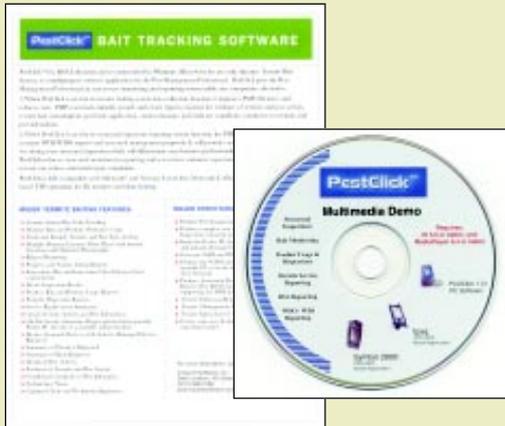
In 2004, take a good look at termite baiting for pre-treats and in particular the Advance termite bait system, and take your renewal revenues to the next level. ³

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Jeff Vannoy is termite marketing manager for Whitmire Micro-Gen.

If you recently switched to Whitmire Micro-Gen's new Advance™ Termite Bait System, there are several excellent training and selling resources available for your business. Visit www.advancetbs.com and pick from a wide selection of tools.

PestClick® Demo CD-Rom

Demonstrates PestClick software for termite bait station tracking, which is recommended by Whitmire Micro-Gen.



Prescription Treatment University Course 230 CD-Rom

This educational CD-Rom trains technicians on the biology and service guidelines for the Advance termite bait system.



Advance Termite Bait System Product Story CD-Rom

This action-packed CD covers all aspects of the Advance product story and key product benefits.



Supplemental Equipment Checklist

Provides a reference checklist of equipment needed when using the Advance termite bait system.



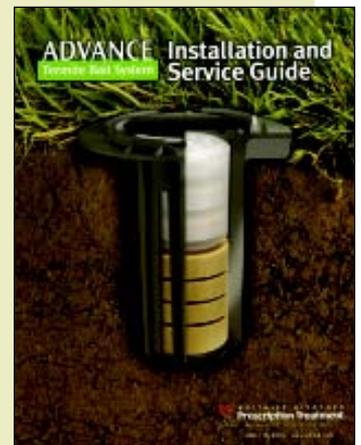
Service and Installation Video

This informative video, hosted by Jeffrey Tucker, B.C.E., takes a new Advance user through the steps from start to finish for installation of the Advance termite bait system. (39 minutes)



Installation and Service Guide

An excellent reference and training tool that covers all aspects of servicing and installing the Advance termite bait system and includes a quick reference chart on inspection frequency and component terminology. It's a must have for all technicians and salespeople learning about the Advance termite bait system.

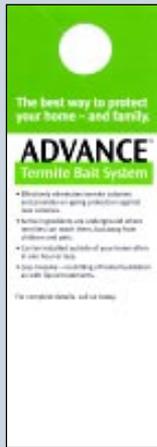


Consumer Brochure



If you are actively selling the Advance termite bait system, then this piece is an essential tool to help you close sales in 2004. This educational piece, designed for consumers, explains the damage termites can do to homes and explains how Advance is an excellent solution for termite problems.

Consumer Door Hanger



Designed with lead generation in mind, this consumer door hanger focuses on the consumer protecting his most valuable investment and calling you for the Advance termite bait system.

Miscellaneous Literature

For interested users of the Advance termite bait system, these three pieces of literature will give you the full story about Advance. The PMP brochure covers in-depth details about the Advance termite bait system, whereas the Tech Note is geared toward the technical aspects. The January PT Quarterly gives an excellent overview of where Whitmire Micro-Gen is going in termite control.



TERMITE MONITORING PRODUCTS

PT[®] 702 and 707 Termite Monitoring Systems

Many PMPs increase revenue from their general insect control accounts by offering a value added, low-cost termite monitoring service which can generate termite control leads. Whitmire Micro-Gen is offering a special promotion to introduce the



PT 702



PT 707



PT 702 and PT 707 termite monitoring stations and to help you get started with your personalized termite monitoring service. Add your name and/or logo on your termite monitoring stations and set yourself apart from your competition. For additional information, log on to www.termitemonitoring.com or call customer service at 800-777-8570.

Closing Termite Work With A Quality Bait

Closing the deal is the key to success and there is always room for improvement. By Patrick Quigley

The close . . . the home run . . . the touchdown . . . the goal . . . the ultimate positive reinforcement! This is what all exceptionally good sales people strive for day in and day out. It's what owners and managers inquire about at the end of the day, week, month and year after year. Why? Because it's the **close** that measures your success in the sales process.

What is **your** closing rate? How can you improve **your** closing percentage? What can you do to make that percentage better? In what part of the sales process should you focus your attention in order to improve?

Whether your closing percentage is 55%, 75% or 85%, there is *always* room for improvement. In this article, you will find the areas to focus on so you can improve your closing percentages this upcoming busy termite season.

There are many important positive factors that you must take into account during the sale that can contribute to a close and/or a higher closing percentage. Consider the following as they pertain to closing termite work during the busy season:

- Your company's philosophy and commitment
- The customer's needs and concerns
- Your ability to provide an excellent inspection
- Your use of the appropriate props and marketing collateral
- Pulling it all together

Your Company's Philosophy and Commitment

What is your company's philosophy and commitment to the homeowner? What are you putting on the table in front of your potential customer that screams, "I'll be here for you if there is an issue in the future!"

The customer must see, believe and trust that you are not only going to take care of him now, but just as importantly, you are going to take care of him in the future. The products and services that you offer should be proven to work in the real world. There must be product history and a system of delivery

that is proven to perform. You must be able to hold your head up high and know that the service that you are providing is the best that your company offers and that your company stands behind the service provided.

Using a bait system such as the Advance™ termite bait system as your primary treatment, in addition to tools which immediately solve interior infestations, is a proven termite protection service. There are many different termite protection

programs for termite control/elimination and no one company has all of the perfect solutions. The fact that you are able to present your company's offering with confidence, look your potential customer in the eye and believe deep down inside that the program is backed 100 percent, will make all the difference in your success with closing that sale.

The Customer's Needs and Concerns

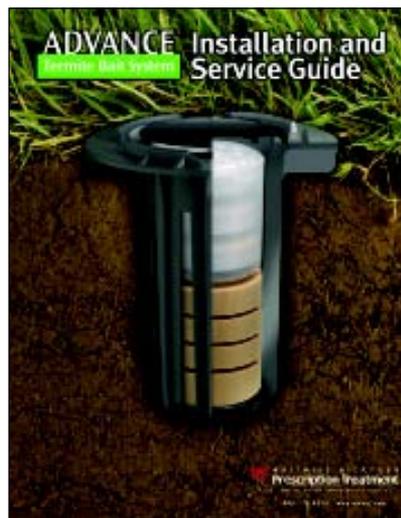
There is an initial emotional reaction from homeowners when they first discover that their home has termites. Many people feel anxious, frustrated and annoyed. There is a quote that I publish regularly in my training manuals that is so important to remember and empathize with when

selling termite services. It reads, "*See John Brown through John Brown's eyes and sell John Brown what John Brown buys!*" —Rich Wilkins. Write it down and put it in a place where you will see it daily.

There is substantial truth to this quote. Often, we are so busy and in such a rush to get to the next call, we don't take time to:

- a) Get to know the client
- b) Take time to find out what the client is looking for

It is well known that consumers favor the presence of exterior termite bait stations, both baiting stations and/or monitors, around their structure. It gives them reassurance that someone or something is watching out for one of their largest investments, their homes. The mere presence of a trained professional checking on their home more than once per year





PT 702 Termite Monitoring Station.

provides a certain degree of comfort.

If you are providing protection with a baiting system like Advance TBS and/or you are monitoring your customers' homes with the new PT® 702 termite monitoring station, you are right on! The PT 702 or the Advance bait station will provide additional opportunity for your sales efforts and increase your company's profits.

Termite customers who are concerned about their home want the reassurance that it is being taken care of by a professional who is not just interested in putting money in his wallet. They want to know that their property is being continually protected, coupled with the assurance that if something goes wrong it will be taken care of in an efficient and effective manner.

Your Ability to Provide an Excellent Inspection

In my career, I have sold many termite jobs to potential customers based solely on the fact that I performed a better inspection than the last three companies. Yet, the "cookie-cutter" approach to termite control is not going to work in many cases. There is a different termite pressure range according to the region and, in many cases, within the homes that you are inspecting. With that said, each inspection should be a complete and full inspection of the home, thus using the appropriate tools for all of the different areas.

Finding termite tubing on the exterior foundation wall of a home does not constitute the right for you to end the inspection. It does not mean that you should stop and offer the customer your program to take care of the termites. You must continue your inspection of all areas of the home, for there may be problems and/or more conducive conditions elsewhere. The bottom line here is if you do a more *thorough* inspection on every home, you may find additional selling opportunities in other areas and thus close more sales.

Your Use of Appropriate Props and Marketing Collateral

Walking into a potential customer's home and sitting down to tell the customer what your company is going to do to eliminate or control termites is just not enough these days. Educating the client about your products and services will prove to be the key to any good sale, even if the customer tells you that he has done a lot of research regarding termites. If you don't provide an in-depth presentation to educate him further, it could prove fatal. Using props such as The Spider™ station access tool, Advance termite bait station, and brag book (testimonials)

and/or company information can be to your advantage. (If you are going to use props, such as The Spider station access tool, which may cause marks on the customer's table, I recommend using a golf towel with your company name [for show] on it as protection against damaging the surface.) Even though the customer may know about termites, he probably does not know about your service and the protection that you offer. Using your props and marketing collateral as sales tools will help you close more business, guaranteed.

Pulling It All Together

When you finally get a chance to talk with potential customers to discuss termite protection services, it is important to summarize your visit and bring the entire meeting into perspective for them. Discuss how they found your organization. Validate their concerns and



Advance Termite Bait Station.

talk about their issues with regard to your termite protection program. Offer the various termite services and products that are available. Run through the full inspection that you performed on his home (provided you did a complete inspection). Discuss the structural issues and soil types that the customer has around his home. If you are including a detailed diagram of the home (highly recommended), walk the customer through the diagram outlining the different applications or placements your company will be making. Present, with confidence, the reasons that your company chooses to provide the treatment and or placement techniques it offers and the benefits that your service will provide to the customer. During the sales presentation, make sure the customer understands the process and your recommendations.

When you consider the five areas outlined above, reflect on how you go about presenting your sales presentation. If there are one or two areas that you believe need to be revised to increase your closing percentages, make the change and take the time to practice on your next call. When you continue to focus on the **entire process** and fine-tune your **entire presentation**, you will reap the rewards that you seek. Good luck. ✎

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 Patrick Quigley is president of Sales Training by Design, Inc.™ and Termite Renewals Corporation located in New Jersey. He is a sales trainer for companies in and out of the service industry where his 23 years of experience offers his audience and customers the expertise and the know-how to become successful in their daily business practices. We invite you to visit Sales Training by Design, Inc.™ on the web at: www.salesbydesign.com. Also visit: www.termite-renewals.com and www.PMPMarketingtools.com for all of your pest management specific marketing needs.

Prescription Treatment® Termite Monitoring

Increase revenue from existing or new accounts with PT®702. By Dave Poling

Why Offer Termite Monitoring?

- **Generate higher profits:** Be proactive with your general insect control accounts and find termites before your customers do. This will result in more termite control business, satisfied customers and higher profits.
- **Increase the value of your service:** General insect control with termite monitoring will give your customers peace-of-mind because they know their home's perimeter is being carefully monitored for termites.
- **Differentiate your service from that of your competitors:** New customers will recognize the additional value of a general insect control service that includes termite monitoring versus one that excludes the detection of termites.
- **Leave a visible sign of your service around your customers' home:** Benefit from a constant reminder of your service by silk screening your company's name and telephone number on your termite monitors. Custom printed stations reinforce the message to your customers that your company is protecting their asset.

Making Money With Termite Monitoring

Example One: Increase revenue from existing or new accounts by charging \$40 - \$80 per home for the installation and monitoring of 10 PT 702 termite monitors around the home. The installation and continued monitoring will take place at the customer's regularly scheduled service. (PT 702 MSRP = \$1.89) Recommend no less

than 10 PT 702 termite monitors per 200 linear feet (Figure A).

Example Two: Increase your chance of selling a termite contract by proactively finding termites before your customer finds them. Use the leads generated from your termite monitors to sell termite control services to your existing accounts. Sell the Advance™ Termite Bait System and watch your revenue grow (for the purpose of this example the average price per home equals \$1,200) (Figure B).

Profit Summary

If your technician is already at the account and the cost of getting him to the account is already accounted for, add-on services to existing accounts will result in increased profits and profit margins. Add-on services maximize incremental profits and minimize incremental overhead charges.

Whitmire Micro-Gen offers five different styles of termite monitors to meet your business needs. For more information about generating more profits with Prescription Treatment termite monitors call Whitmire Micro-Gen's customer service at 800-777-8570 or go to www.termitemonitoring.com.

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Dave Poling is director of residential markets for Whitmire Micro-Gen.

Additional Revenue Per Home	Additional Revenue From 250 Homes	Material Cost	Additional Revenue From 500 Homes	Material Cost	Additional Revenue From 1,000 Homes	Material Cost
\$40	\$10,000	\$4,725	\$20,000	\$9,450	\$40,000	\$18,900
\$60	\$15,000	\$4,725	\$30,000	\$9,450	\$60,000	\$18,900
\$80	\$20,000	\$4,725	\$40,000	\$9,450	\$80,000	\$18,900

Figure A.

Termite Monitoring Accounts	Additional Revenue If 5% Sign Baiting Contracts	Additional Revenue If 10% Sign Baiting Contracts	Additional Revenue If 20% Sign Baiting Contracts
250	\$15,000	\$30,000	\$60,000
500	\$30,000	\$60,000	\$120,000
1,000	\$60,000	\$120,000	\$240,000

Figure B.

Introducing PT[®] 250 Propoxur Residual Aerosol

Have you heard the phrase “The Good Never Die”? Do you remember Whitmire PT 250 Baygon? By Missi Bachman

We asked PMPs across the nation what they thought of the original PT 250 formulation and the answers were overwhelmingly positive. We heard comments like fast knockdown, long-lasting residual and a great non-repellent product for homes. Responses like this convinced us to create a new formulation using the active ingredient propoxur. In the spring of 2004, Whitmire Micro-Gen will add a new residual aerosol formulation to your arsenal of PT products, PT 250 Propoxur.



Why Should You Use PT 250?

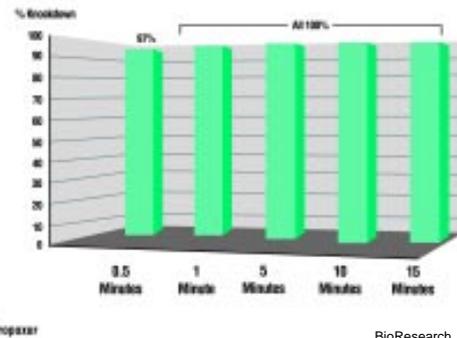
The availability of PT 250 could not come at a better time. The EPA has listed propoxur as an alternative for some uses of chlorpyrifos, an organophosphate. PT 250 is labeled for indoor residential treatments, for use in food-handling establishments and it is a great rotational product with pyrethroids.

The PT 250 formulation leaves behind a non-repellent crystallized residual barrier. Cockroaches are known for their survival tactics. Propoxur is a carbamate and it does not have cross-resistance with pyrethroids on cockroaches. The known history of cockroach resistance, combined with the rise in occasional invaders, has PMPs all across the nation focusing on the importance of new formulations, precision pesticide placement, and crack and crevice treatments. PT 250 is packaged for convenience in a pressurized aerosol that is compatible with System III[®], the preferred tool for precision pesticide placement.

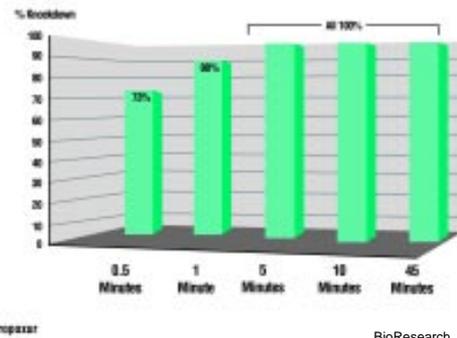
To request additional technical information on PT 250 contact your local distributor or customer service at 800-777-8570 for our product tech note. 

Missi Bachman is marketing manager for Whitmire Micro-Gen.

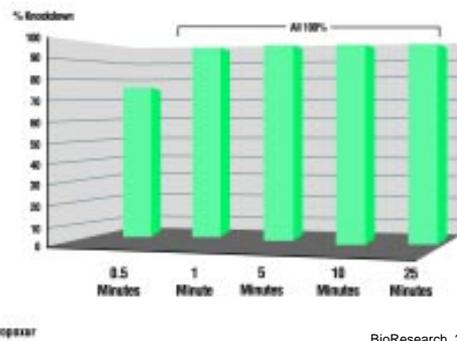
PT 250 – Confused Flour Beetles



PT 250 – Carpenter Ants



PT 250 – Silverfish



Cy-Kick® CS and Cool Cap Technology

A fast-acting, long-lasting dilutable insecticide which contains Cool Cap capsule suspension technology. By Dave Poling

Cy-Kick CS is labeled for use in and around residential and commercial structures, including food-handling/food processing establishments and produces excellent results on a wide variety of pests.

Cool Cap technology is a proprietary technology that increases the number of microcapsules while decreasing their size. This results in better, more blanketed coverage of treated surfaces. Better coverage results in quicker knockdown and more satisfied customers.

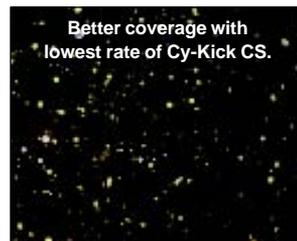


Cool Cap technology prolongs the life of the active ingredient, cyfluthrin, by creating a slow-release protection zone. This results in a long-lasting insect barrier both indoors and out which results in fewer crawlbacks for your customer and fewer callbacks for you!

In order to fully understand the value of Cy-Kick CS, you must first understand what a microcapsule is and how it improves the performance of an insecticide. Cool Cap technology is a process designed to increase residuality of the active pesticides. Cool Cap



Cy-Kick CS cool cap micro-caps shown on a cricket eye, magnified 100 times (left), and a cricket leg, magnified 150 times (right). For additional photos of crickets and carpenter ants, go to image gallery at www.cykickcs.com.



Cy-Kick CS 0.025% lowest rate.



Demand CS 0.03% middle rate.

Photos taken during research conducted in 2000.

capsules are manufactured by adding a carbon-based polymer into a cyfluthrin emulsion, essentially adding skin to a droplet of oil containing cyfluthrin. The end result is a droplet of cyfluthrin in a plastic capsule. Most of the capsules (95%) are less than 20 microns in diameter, the same small size as the droplets produced from the best fogging equipment.

Cool Cap plastic capsules result in many benefits for pest management professionals and their customers.

Reduced Technician Sensitivity

With the cyfluthrin encapsulated in the Cool Cap, technicians should not experience the same level of skin sensitivity (paresthesia) they might experience with insecticides that are not encapsulated.

Reduced Plant Sensitivity

This holds true for plants as well. Cool Caps reduce the exposure of plants to both the insecticide and the oil in which it resides inside the capsule.

Reduced Staining/Marking

With the average capsule size less than 20 microns, the capsules themselves will not create a visible residue on most surfaces under normal applications. Cool Caps will also reduce the exposure of sprayed surfaces from the inert ingredients found in the formulation.

Even Coverage

The specific density of Cy-Kick CS is nearly equivalent to water, resulting in a finished spray that requires little agitation to remain in full suspension. This results in a consistent finished product and even coverage of Cool Caps on applied surfaces.

PMP FEEDBACK:

“Cy-Kick CS liquid works great for fly control. It’s easy to mix with low phytotoxicity. I appreciate the safety benefits relating to technicians and customers.”

— *Stephen Gates, Pest Control Services Manager,
Cook’s Pest Control*

Superior Efficacy

With a virtual minefield of capsules, a Cy-Kick CS barrier is challenging for insects to cross without exposing themselves to a lethal dose of insecticide. Exposure to the insecticide is enhanced because the capsules stay on the surface where they are applied. Insects crawl across the capsule barrier, inadvertently crushing capsules and causing an immediate exposure to the active insecticide. Insects will also unknowingly pick up capsules that are later ingested during the grooming process or crushed and absorbed into the body. Exposure time required to receive a lethal dose is minimized because of the readily available microencapsulated insecticide.

High Performance Active

Cyfluthrin is a light-stable, broad spectrum active with low mammalian and fish toxicity. It is a third-generation synthetic pyrethroid. The addition of the 4-fluoro molecule to the benzyl ester group makes it twice as active as previous generation pyrethroids.

Complete Label

Cy-Kick CS is labeled for use in and around nearly every site imaginable including: apartments, campgrounds, food-storage areas, homes, hospitals, hotels, meat-packing plants, food-processing plants, motels, nursing homes, resorts, restaurants and other food-handling establishments, schools, supermarkets, transportation equipment such as buses, boats, ships, trains, planes (do not use in aircraft cabins), utilities, warehouses, commercial and industrial buildings.

Cy-Kick CS is also labeled for most insect pests, including: ants, bees, cockroaches, crickets, fleas, flies, hornets, silverfish, spiders, termites, ticks, wasps, wood-infesting borers, etc.

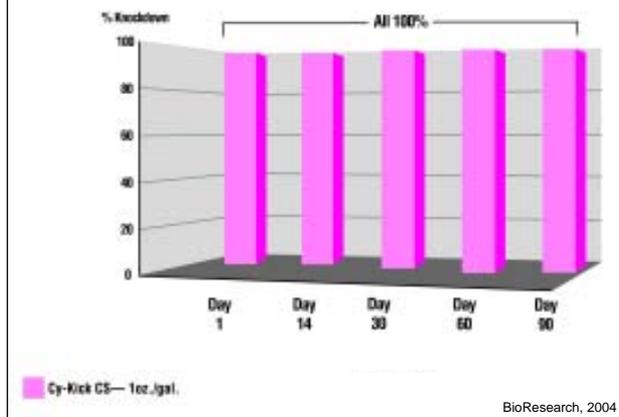
Cost-Competitive Solution

Whitmire Micro-Gen is in the business of adding value to insecticides by providing superior products, training and support. We also make pest management more profitable by providing cost-effective value in every product we sell. Cy-Kick CS has all the performance a professional pest management company requires and a cost-competitive price. Go to www.pestcalculators.com and use our online calculators to quantify the value of Cy-Kick CS for your business.

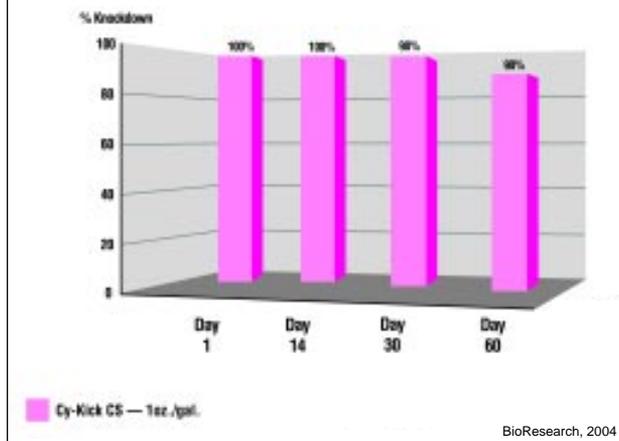
Cy-Kick CS is a high-performance product with a cost-competitive price. It delivers the kind of innovation only a company that has spent 70 years focused entirely on pest management solutions could provide. Go to www.cykickcs.com to learn more about Cy-Kick CS today! 

Dave Poling is director of residential markets for Whitmire Micro-Gen.

90-Day Residual Trial – Argentine Ants on Concrete



60-Day Residual Trial – Field Crickets on Mulch



Using Granular Baits For Ant Control

Granular baits work slowly compared to chemical treatments of individual mounds. By Dr. Steven Sims

In contrast to insecticidal granules that have a simple contact kill mode of action, granular baits stimulate ants to express normal foraging, recruitment and colony feeding-food sharing behavior. Workers find bait particles and haul them back to the colony where they are fed to larvae and, after larval mastication and partial digestion, are consumed by other workers and reproductives. The active ingredient in the bait, through various modes of action, disrupts the life cycle of the colony, which may be reduced in size or totally eliminated. In general, active ingredients that are neurotoxic (i.e., abamectin, spinosad) or



The best ant choices for the granular bait approach are fire ants (shown above), pavement ants, big-headed ants, pharaoh ants and little black ants. Photo: Scott Bauer/ARS/USDA.

disrupt energy production (i.e., hydramethylnon, sulfluramid) can kill all life stages whereas insect growth regulators (IGRs) (i.e., methoprene, pyriproxyfen) kill developing stages and prevent worker replacement.

Granular baits are designed to work slowly compared to chemical treatments of individual mounds. This allows time for workers to return to the colony and provision the larvae. Although workers may be able to consume small amounts of lipids (fat) that are used in granule formulations, their main route of exposure to active ingredients will be from feeding on larval regurgitate. The advantage of slow speed of action is that more ants, and more colonies in a treated area, will be exposed to the active ingredient before significant mortality occurs. On the other hand, control can be depressingly slow – weeks or even months – and this can test the patience of even the most understanding customer.

Why Use Granular Baits For Ant Control?

One important reason to use granular baits for ant control is that there is a reduced risk of active ingredient exposure compared to liquid insecticide. Products such as wettable powders, concentrates and contact-kill granular materials that are used for individual mound treatments, perimeter sprays or broadcast, have a high concentration of active ingredient. In contrast, baits, with the exception of the borate-based products, do not contain more than 1.0 percent active ingredient. Therefore, at the common use rate of 1.0 to 1.5 lb of granular bait product per acre (43,560 sq. ft.), less than 0.25 oz. of active ingredient is applied. This element of reduced risk is true not only for the operator but also for non-target invertebrates, birds and mammals because targeted ants quickly forage on and remove the granules.

Another benefit of granular ant baits is that they are often the most economical way to control widespread species with multiple colonies, such as fire ants. The efficiency is a function of both material cost and labor savings.

Ant control using baits tends to be longer lasting than control with contact insecticides. Unless a thorough drench application is made to a colony nest, it's likely that the treatment will kill only foraging workers. Since foragers usually represent 10 percent or less of the total colony, only temporary suppression is achieved.

A variety of bait matrices and active ingredients are pres-

ently available. They are convenient to use, have good storage stability and are attractive to ants interested in proteins and/or lipids.

How Do You Use Granular Baits For Ant Control?

There are basically two methods for applying granular ant baits – broadcast and mound treatments. Use the broadcast approach when you are not sure where the colonies are located, when large areas require treatment and when the pricing of the product makes this approach cost effective. Verify that label directions permit broadcast treatment and remember that some granular ant bait products cannot be used in crop production areas. Appropriate timing of bait application (early morning or early evening, for example) can help to ensure rapid foraging on the bait by the target ant species, protect the bait from weather deterioration (dew, rain) and minimize exposure to non-target ants and other invertebrates.

Broadcast applications of granular ant baits are best made with properly calibrated application equipment dedicated to this use. Applicators such as fertilizer spreaders with rotary-type agitators should be avoided because baits often contain oil that leads to “caking” during treatment. In addition, food bait used in equipment contaminated with materials (such as fertilizers) can lose its attractiveness to ants.

Although aerial bait applications are sometimes used, the more common types of broadcast applicators for baits are manual spreaders and electric spreaders.

Inexpensive manual spreaders from companies such as Ortho or Scott’s are hand-powered and ideal for treating small areas. Application rates will vary with bait characteristics, flow outlet setting and applicator speed (slow walk, fast walk, etc.). Calibration should be done before each application.

Electric spreaders such as those from Herd Seeder Co. (www.herdseeder.com) and Thompson Seeder Co. (www.thompsonseeder.com) have vibrating opening plates and rotating spreading discs or fans. Fire ant baits are the typical product used in this type of spreader. Application width is pre-set or adjustable with a rheostat. These applicators can be mounted on a truck or other vehicle that can maintain a low speed. Again, proper calibration before use is important.

Mound treatment is indicated when there are relatively few ant colonies in a given area and their location can be identified. This might be a more efficient and cost-effective approach under low colony density circumstances. It also may reduce competition from native ant species and other non-target invertebrates for the bait.

When Do You Use Granular Baits for Ant Control?

First and foremost, properly identify the species of ant that you are attempting to control. The use of granular baits is usually not an effective tactic on ant species that are primarily sugar-liquid feeders. This category includes Argentine, crazy, ghost, honey and white-footed ants. Better ant choices for the

granular bait approach include fire ants (*Solenopsis* sp.), pavement ants (*Tetramorium* sp.), big-headed ants (*Pheidole* sp.), and *Monomorium* sp. (pharaoh ant, little black ant, etc.).

One major difficulty in the successful use of granular baits (or for that matter, any ant bait) involves short-term and long-

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term (seasonal) changes in ant food preferences. Each ant colony has complex dietary requirements that can change over time and over the course of a season. This can be wet season vs. dry season in the tropics and subtropics or the spring-summer-fall seasons in temperate regions.

The black carpenter ant (*Camponotus pennsylvanicus*), for example, generally prefers protein-based foods in the spring and early summer but its preference shifts to sweet liquids in late summer and early fall. Similarly, *Lasius niger* (closely related to our North American cornfield ant) has been documented to have a preference shift from protein to sweet liquids at mid-summer in Great Britain. Argentine ants show a definite preference for liquid carbohydrates most of the year but during the summer brood-rearing months, proteins can account for 25%-60% of the food brought into the colony.

Work by J.P. Edwards and L. Abraham (1990. *Med. Vet. Entomol.* Vol. 4, 205-211) on the pharaoh ant is particularly enlightening regarding changing diet preferences. There were two behavioral traits that influence the way foraging pharaoh ant workers responded to foods. Workers initially showed a distinct preference for certain foods (i.e., honey and peanut butter) but after feeding on this diet for several weeks followed by a choice, the workers always switched their preference to a different type of food. The authors called this the “satiation” response. In addition, workers showed a marked tendency to alternate between carbohydrate foods and protein foods, a behavior termed the “alternation” response. It’s easy to see how this type of behavior in pharaoh ants, and probably other ant species, can cause headaches for PMPs.

So what’s a person to do when faced with this variability? The most practical solution is to simply carry several types of baits and do a “choice” experiment first before committing to the use of any particular product. This test shouldn’t take long and could mean the difference between successful control and a repeat visit. ❧

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Pest Control in Mexico: Growing Stronger

The Mexican pest control industry continues to work hard and build relationships. By Benjamin Gomez Guerrero

In 1995, I was invited to Univar headquarters to meet with Bevan Cates, president, to talk about Mexico and the pest control industry. Bevan concluded our six-hour meeting and market analysis by asking one question – “Is there room for Univar Mexico?” The answer was “Yes.”

To Predict the Future, Create it Today

Every day since 1996, we have created a new pest management industry in Mexico. Today John Bolaños, President of Univar Mexico, has been a true market engine that foresees new and changing times.

Our industry was formed by international/multinational companies that ruled the industry such as Zeneca, Roussell, Ciba, FMC, Rhone-Poulenc, Dow, Bayer and Cyanamid. At that time, there were 884 PCOs across the nation, 436 members in the Mexican pest control association and around 40 distributors, several of them were PCOs as well. Due to the severe devaluation of the Mexican peso falling in its exchange rate to the US dollar from \$3.00 pesos per \$1.00 US dollars to \$6.00 pesos per \$1.00 US dollar, and the extremely high interest rates close to 77% annually, the pest control industry sales dropped 60 percent in just one year.

The Mexican political environment was changing and the environmental approach demanded new pest control. To create new business in Mexico, some recommendations were made to Univar. They included: assigning a foreign investor in the supply chain after NAFTA foreign investment was approved in Mexico; finding allies in Mexico (a partner, representative or formal agent); never doing business over the phone or in English; not selling obsolete technology; submitting environmental information for registering products before the national registrant agency; offering an adequate portfolio of technologies; always presenting a financial solution; offering maintenance with equipment; having long-term funding with soft interest rates; choosing between affordable technology vs. fashionable; and always considering the money to work straight under Mexican law vs. money for litigation.

Future Vision

The vision for the future meant reaffirming the potential of

the 10th economy of the world (then Mexico was 10th, now it's 8th); providing better services and higher standards for better quality of living; reaching international standards quickly; creating opportunities for franchises (then there were only two in Mexico), now franchises are a natural player in the market, growing by acquisitions or expansion of territory; inflation rates of 30 percent and an economy recovery by mid 1996.

Stronger Than Ever

Today, the Mexican pest control industry is going strong with more than 3,000 certified and 12,000 uncertified PMP companies. Of the PMP services in the sector, the pest control industry is better because of the vision of several people and enhanced industry standards.

The Mexican pest control association has played a strong role in reaching these goals with leaders like Alfredo Castellanos Z., CEO of Grupo OIKOS, Joaquin Nava, General Manager of Delcen Pest Control and Juan Yudico, Director General of Servicontrol, who brought a new dimension to an industry often thought of in Mexico as unprofessional. Now, it has been recognized nationally by the government as a health protector with new certification standards required from AIB, ISO, HACCP, OSHA and several others.

Industry consolidation has also reached our market as worldwide and global environmental concern and approach is a daily task. Today, the Mexican industry employs more than 20,000 people.

International companies doing business in Mexico have found a secure way by having the proper representation, product registration when needed and exporting without having a collection problem.

Today, Mexico is a valued partner of the USA, being ranked as number two or three as an international trade partner. We can proudly say that by bringing advanced products like the Whitmire Micro-Gen line into Mexico, the Mexican pest control industry counts on us to provide innovative tools to solve today's pest control problems. ❧

Benjamin Gomez Guerrero is director general of Univar México.