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Mole Cricket Control: Custom Application of Nematodes on Pasture is An Option

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Distributors

Becker Underwood of Ames, Iowa started marketing the mole cricket nematode under the trade name Nematac® S in spring 2002. Several distributors have signed up to make the product locally available. When ordering nematodes, you may chose from the following distributor list: Agro Distribution of Hastings, FL; Ben Hill Griffin Fertilizer, Frstproof and LaBelle; Diamond R Fertilizer, Ft Pierce, LaBelle, Okeechobee and Winter Garden; Helena Chemical, Alachua, Dundee, Ft. Pierce, Mt. Dora, Palmetto and Wauchula; ProSource One, Belle Glade, Ellenton, Ft. Pierce, Plant City and Wauchula; and UAP of Ft, Pierce, Hastings, Parrish, Wauchula and Waverly.

Order, Shipment and Storage

According to Gabe Diaz-Saavedra, Becker Underwood's Sales Representative in SE USA, the minimum order of nematodes supplied consist of four packets (sleeves) containing eight dishes for a total of 2 billion nematodes. This will cover 2 acres of wall-to-wall complete application on golf courses but 16 acres of strip application on pasture. The orders are arranged through the local distributors but, because the nematode is a perishable commodity, shipment is made directly to you the purchaser in order to prevent delays and storage problems. You are responsible for maintaining the quality of nematodes once delivered to you. The nematode sleeves are packed in styrofoam boxes on ice packs and shipped by express mail. When received, the sleeves must be removed from styrofoam boxes and refrigerated immediately at about 40 oF. Retain the styrofoam

boxes and put ice packs in the freezer part of your refrigerator for future use when transporting nematodes to the field for application.

Timing and Methods of Application

The nematodes are most effective on adult and pre-adult mole crickets. The best time to apply nematodes in south-central Florida is from mid-August to November for a fall or from mid-February to April for a spring application when adult tawny mole crickets are most abundant. Early fall application may be preferable because it allows for a longer period of time for mole crickets to become infected before female tawny mole crickets lay their eggs in March to May. Strip-application on pasture with ordinary boom sprayer is possible in mid-August in the evenings either during rainfall or if followed by rainfall within 30 minutes of application. Rain is difficult to predict so for best results the nematodes should be placed about ½ an inch below the soil surface to protect them from UV light and from drying out. This is accomplished by using an injection rig. You can convert your old sod-seeder into a nematode application rig by adding a tank, a pump, hoses and nozzles. A billion nematodes are mixed in 50-100 gallons of tank water under constant agitation to provide aeration. This mixture is enough for 8 acres of pasture using strip-application. If all this about tank mixing and strip-injection on pasture sounds complicated and beyond your ability, a custom nematode applicator is now available to perform the task for a fee. Consult your county livestock agent or Martin B Adjei (863-735-1314) in selecting a nematode distributor and in obtaining the services of a custom nematode applicator.