

New Insecticide Products for Control of House Flies

Fly baits (or scatter baits) have been used by animal producers for many years to manage house fly as part of an integrated pest management program. At times of the year when house fly populations were high, these baits could be used to supplement the primary fly control techniques of sanitation and manure management. Fly baits were used by scattering the bait granules on the ground near animal pens and corrals or by placing them into bait stations.

Until recently, all fly baits registered for use in California were similar. All of the baits contained the fly killing chemical Methomyl and the fly pheromone attractant Muscalure to attract flies. Baits differed only in the size, shape, and color of the bait granules, and perhaps in the composition of feeding attractants added to the granular bait. Recent studies by University of California researchers have shown that house fly resistance to the Methomyl insecticide used in these products is very high in many house fly populations in California. This resistance may explain the failure of these Methomyl baits to kill house flies that has been noted by producers over the last 5-10 years.

Recognizing that the Methomyl baits were no longer performing as well as they had prior to the 1990's, it was clear that new chemical baits were needed. In response, two new fly bait products have become available in California. The two products are a fly bait strip called "QuickStrike" produced by Starbar and a granular fly bait called "QuickBayt" produced by Bayer Animal Health. Like other fly bait products, these new products contain the fly pheromone Muscalure as well as feeding attractants. What is new about these products is that they both use new chemical insecticides to kill houseflies. Both of these products can be purchased through local farm and feed stores.

QuickStrike is a bait strip with the fly bait material housed within a plastic strip frame. QuickStrike contains the fly killing chemical Nithiazine which offers a fast knockdown of flies that eat the bait. The bait strip can be placed near animal pens and corrals out of reach of the animals and is best placed low to the ground and near areas where flies already congregate.

QuickBayt is sold as a granular bait containing the fly killing chemical Imidacloprid (the same chemical used to control fleas on dogs). Imidacloprid also offers a fast knockdown of flies that eat the bait. QuickBayt can be scattered on the ground or placed into a bait station near animal pens and corrals. QuickBayt can also be mixed with water and painted onto surfaces to kill resting flies. Painted surfaces should be cleaned or repainted after 2-3 weeks to prevent flies from rapidly developing resistance to the Imidacloprid chemical. This granular bait is best used by scattering the bait on the ground in the vicinity of animal pens where flies tend to congregate.

Although these new products have not been tested by University of California researchers to ensure that they work, it is presumed that these new products will outperform the old Methomyl products as flies should not be resistant to the new chemicals. As with all chemical products, read the label prior to use and follow label instructions for use and storage. Also, please keep in mind that chemicals are the means of last resort for management of house fly. A proper sanitation and manure management program should ensure that house fly populations are kept low through most of the year.

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