



NISUS CORPORATION TECHNICAL MEMO SPRINGTIME BAITING

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The warmer spring months, with more sunlight, mark the beginning of increased insect activity in the new year. Particularly, ant colony size will start to grow with an associated increase in feeding and foraging. This is the ideal time to conduct an insect bait treatment around the periphery of the structure one wishes to protect. In most cases, one should use a granular bait. This of course depends on geographic location and the pest insect species in question. What's ideal about granular baits is that they have the potential to attract a variety of insect species groups. This includes crickets, roaches, silverfish, other occasional invaders, and, of course, ants. The characteristic of the bait, especially its relation to particle size and attractants, will help to promote efficacy involving particular pest insect species. For example, some particle baits are designed for carpenter ants, and have a greater tendency to attract this group of ants, more so than other particle baits. However, other ant species smaller in size, such as the little black ant *Monomorium minimum*, might find the larger particle size less attractive. Some insects, such as silverfish and firebrats, however, tend to forage in a non-specific manner and are less influenced by particle size. These groups are general feeders and forage a large swath of food items.

The active ingredient(s) of a bait can pose and produce different effects as well. Active ingredients, such as Indoxicarb, Fipronil and Imidacloprid, work faster than compounds such as borates. However, these active ingredients can produce a population-rebound effect, and they are far more expensive when used to imply imminent death to control the same-size pest insect population. Borates, a pure nature toxin, has an asymptote, than when reached death is imminent. Borates exhibit no resistance and they can be used in conjunction with other active ingredients without the risk of cross resistance, unlike that which can occur when multiple products with the same active ingredients are used. Hence, it is advisable to rotate products when baiting. An example would involve Advion for the first application, for a faster kill rate, then using Niban for subsequent applications, or visa/versa for a bait maintenance program.

Liquid baits are efficacious in baiting programs as well. In fact, for some insect pest species, liquid baits are ideal. For example, Argentine ants are more prone to consume liquid ant baits than particle baits, particularly in drier climates. Using liquid baits in these cases, in large volumes when ants start to emerge, can help lower initial colony size, which will result in reduction of colony numbers. Moving the liquid bait stations in response to changes in foraging patterns, and colony movement as well, is advised in order to maximize results. Of course, liquid baits and/or a particle bait in containers need to be monitored, refilled, and/or changed as necessary. Increased labor and attention will be needed.

Again, it is attention to detail that helps most to maximize results. Indeed, spreading particle baits and placing liquid stations strategically will promote efficacy and help to reduce callbacks. In this connection, some insect species forage randomly, but ants do not. Their attention and energy are focused and driven towards specific sets of resources needed for colony growth and maintenance. Not applying enough granules and misplacing liquid stations might preclude achievement of desired effect. Nisus Corporation offers training videos that demonstrate the ideal application process, particularly for *Niban granular insect bait*. When you choose to use a bait from any manufacturer, search their website for valuable training videos. If possible, use a neighbor's yard to familiarize yourself with the technique.

Baiting has important benefits one can market to the customer. Educate the customer about various aspects of a bait, such as advantages of a particular formulation(s), the application processes, and the bait's ability to target particular pest insect species while not harming non-target insects. This is an excellent communication tool you can employ. Focus on environmental stewardship if a "green solution" is being offered. You can use this communication strategy to enroll a customer, and perhaps have the contract specifically restricted to baiting – particularly when promoting it as a "green service."

Using baits in a green service is mandatory. In addition, also is the strict use of the compounds of nature, mainly a borate bait such as Niban as the primary bait. Of course, there is a chance that insect intrusion or pest pressure could require additional methods and additional products that contain synthetic compounds, but use these in a supplemental fashion.

Interior treatments should be no different. Educate the homeowner about the importance of spring baiting and its preventing interior intrusion. This will help to gain the account. If pest insect intrusion does occur, borate baits such as Magnetic Roach Bait, Niban, and Dominant, a liquid ant bait, can cover the gamut of all needed insect pest treatments. Placing particle baits in specialized containers is also important for strategic application. For example, if ants are intruding from an electrical outlet, establishing one station with sufficient material has the potential to eliminate foraging. This can be supplemented with faster-acting synthetic baits when needed.

Take note that introducing a bait rotation program, perhaps allowing for additional treatments, is almost always advantageous. I am not saying you should avoid offering other programs to your potential customers, but a new innovation is always a plus. I believe offering such services at the start of the pest season will help acquire accounts and will foster increased customer retention. Most customers prefer services that are conducted outside the structure and want interior treatments *only* when necessary. Spring-time baiting will help mitigate the need for interior treatments. Show the customer a list of the bait product line. Include an assortment of containerized baits, liquids, pastes, and gels that can be used. Yes, the more education the better. Happy baiting!



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