

Unconventional Products Don't Control Rootworm

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Have you heard of anyone using some strange products for the control of rootworm larvae on corn and wondered how they worked? Iowa State University and several other universities in the Midwest have been evaluating some of these unconventional products for several years. I would like to share a summary of their findings.

The odd products evaluated included soybean meal, sulfur, sugar, turpentine, dry molasses, and a mixture of kelp, fish meal, and diatomaceous earth.

The Iowa 1-6 root rating scale was used to evaluate the performance of these products. This is the nationally accepted rating system for evaluation of root damage due to insect feeding. In the rating system, roots are visually examined for rootworm feeding damage. A rating of 1 has very little or no feeding damage while a rating of 6 has severe feeding damage. In fact a rating of 6 has very few roots. The important number to remember in the system is that any rating over 3 will result in yield losses.

Here's how Iowa State Researcher, Dr. M. E. Rice summarized the studies.

"The use of alternative, or

unconventional, products to protect corn roots from insect damage continues to attract the attention of Iowa farmers," said Rice. "The fascination behind the use of these unconventional products (I hate to call them insecticides because as you will see, they don't control insects) apparently is that they are safer for the farmer to handle and are less detrimental to the environment."

Dr. Rice doesn't mention it but I would guess they are also much cheaper to use. According to Rice, farmer testimonial has been widely used during the last couple of years to promote the use of these products.

In Minnesota, a conventional insecticide was compared to sulfur and to sugar and a check treatment at several locations.

TREATMENT	FOOT FEEDING RATING
Conventional Insecticide	2.18
Check	3.25
Sulfur	3.22
Sugar	3.33

Only the conventional insecticide product had a root rating below 3. The sulfur and sugar treatments had ratings which were

statistically the same as the check.

Iowa compared several insecticides with soybean meal.

TREATMENT	FOOT FEEDING RATING
Conventional Insecticides	2.71
Check	4.52
Soybean Meal	4.83

Again only the conventional insecticides showed any control.

In Wisconsin, several insecticides were compared to turpentine, molasses, sulfur, and a mixture of kelp, fishmeal, and diatomaceous earth.

TREATMENT	FOOT FEEDING RATING
Conventional Insecticide	2.29
Molasses	3.35
Turpentine	3.70
Check	3.95
Sulfur	4.30
Sea Food Combo	4.35

All of the studies results strongly suggest that none of the unconventional treatments are effective in the control of rootworm larvae.

If your corn field has a problem, don't count on any of these treatments.

If you would like a more complete copy of the data, contact Bob Anderson at the Lancaster County Extension Office, (717) 394-6851.

ASA Plans Video Auctions

BOZEMAN, Mont. — The American Simmental Association (ASA), working in conjunction with Satellite Cattle Exchange (SCE), Ltd., has scheduled two upcoming video auctions of Simmental and Simbrah-influenced feeder cattle.

The two sales are scheduled for August 15 and again on October 3.

"The association believes that the opportunities for video marketing Simmental and Simbrah cattle are unlimited," said ASA Executive Vice President Brian Kitchen. "It means that the calves never leave the ranch until they're ready for delivery to a known buyer at a known price!"

In 1990, an estimated 1.5 to 2 million head of cattle were sold through video auction, and the number is expected to rise as cattle

buyers and sellers realize the advantages.

SCE has more than 120 representatives nationwide to handle consignments of cattle for upcoming sales. Once a cattleman agrees to sell his cattle through SCE, a videotape of the cattle is made, and a representative writes a detailed description of the cattle to be published in a sale catalog.

On sale day, a master tape of all consigned cattle is broadcast via satellite across the U.S. and can be viewed by those attending central bidding stations or by owners of satellite dishes. Bidding from home is done by telephone.

Interested Simmental and Simbrah breeders may obtain additional information by calling Tom White at ASA (800) 548-0205 or Danny Burns at SCE (800) 543-5905.

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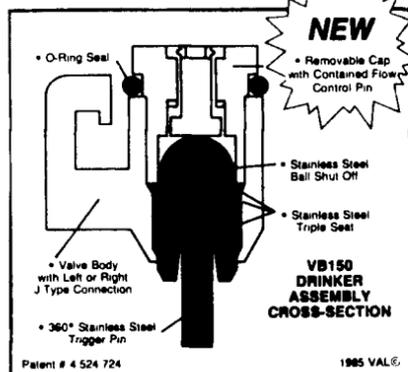
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