SELECTING A PESTICIDE
By Austin Frishman Page 4

BATTLE OF THE BUGMEN
By Grady Jones Page 8

FUNGUS BEETLES: AN OVERLOOKED PEST
By Jeff Weier Page 14
The Presidential elections will be taking place in about a hundred days. We as Nevadans are facing many crucial issues that are affecting our great state as well as our businesses. We are listed in the top three in the nation when it comes to unemployment, as well as home foreclosures. Our Health Insurance rates are one of the highest in the nation as well and continue to rise every year. With the Supreme Court’s decision on Obama Care, it looks like a “wait and see” till after this upcoming election.

The majority of our Pest Control Businesses are considered small business. As we are a service-orientated business, our customers who are facing hard times must make cut backs in their household budgets. They seem to be cutting back on our industry as well as landscaping, pool maintenance, cable TV and so on. Being compassionate on the phone with your customers will pay off in the future. Forcing them to continue to have a service that they can’t afford will probably hurt you in the future.

On a positive note, our gasoline prices at the pumps are the lowest that they have been this year. I understand that the BIG OIL COMPANIES profits have been dropping for that reason and they may have to lay off one or two Congressmen from their payrolls to show a profit. I guess we are all struggling to make ends meet.

On a personal note, I believe all of the above problems can be fixed if ALL of our ELECTED OFFICIALS were limited to TWO TERMS in office and could only live off SOCIAL SECURITY at retirement, not from just their two terms of office but they would have to work till their retirement age of 65 and have to pay for their Medical Treatment like all us Americans do.

So whether you own your business or are a Pest Control Technician you need to vote in the next presidential election and vote for a candidate that you feel can solve some of our problems. Like my Father who immigrated to the United States legally after World War II always said, “if you vote you have the right to complain about what’s happening in your world. If you don’t vote, DON’T COMPLAIN.” God Bless America and all our Servicemen who protect us.
The number of pesticide formulations available to our industry keeps increasing. There are not necessarily more active ingredient, just more selections. Generics, reduced risk, no EPA registration needed, organic biological and combinations of old products are at your disposal. How do you make a final selection? Each product should go through a series of hurdles (questions).

The answers must be correct all along the way for you to make a confident choice. Here are 25 questions you should be asking.

1. Is it registered in my state? Be careful of on-line products.
2. Is a reputable company manufacturing the product?
3. Is a reputable distributor handling it?
4. Who is currently using it? For how long? Obtain at least two PMP firms you can call and ask for feedback.
5. What, if anything does it replace in my current arsenal?
6. What is the cost per finished gallon or ounces (baits)?
7. Can it be used in residential and commercial accounts?
8. What areas can you use it? (Ex: Indoors, exterior, type of accounts)
9. What areas are off limits (Ex: Food processing)?
10. Is there an odor problem?
11. At what temperature will it come out of solution and/or freeze?
12. Once mixed, how long will it stay in solution?
13. What type of equipment is needed to apply it? Does it plug screens?
14. Does it stain? If so, what surfaces?
15. What safety equipment must you wear when mixing and applying?
16. How often can you re-apply it in the same area?
17. What range of pests are covered?
18. What is the antidote? Does it have an antidote?
19. Is it phytoxic (Kills plants - if so, which species)?
20. What is the signal word? Why?
21. For baits, does it contain common allergens (peanuts, gluten)?
22. Is the packaging easy to handle and mix as well as carry in the vehicle?
23. What is the mode of action and to what chemical group does it belong?
24. Is it irritating to the skin and/or eyes?
25. Does the MSDS sheet show any problems you are concerned about?
Concrete a move. There will always be weather issues, personnel will always be some sort of reason or excuse to delay making unknown. Their self-imposed comfort zones. There is also a fear of the The problem is and truth is that many owners are either Running in place does not win any race. And if you think much more aggressive in sales and service and marketing. Companies come and go, but many newer companies are that have been in that area for 20 years or more? Yes, some move forward and they stand still – they will lose more and Unfortunately, time waits for no one. So if their competitors finds the PERFECT time for him. These people are generally good people but time is eating them up. If the world would wait for them – they would be fine. Unfortunatly, time waits for no one. So if their competitors move forward and they stand still – they will lose more and more market share.

How often do you see a new company come to town and in 5 years they are bigger than many of the companies that have been in that area for 20 years or more? Yes, some companies come and go, but many newer companies are much more aggressive in sales and service and marketing. Running in place does not win any race. And if you think that running faster in place helps you at all – good luck to you. The problem is and truth is that many owners are either content where they are at or they are afraid to step out of their self-imposed comfort zones. There is also a fear of the unknown. There is rarely a perfect time to make changes. There will always be some sort of reason or excuse to delay making a move. There will always be weather issues, personnel issues, family issues, cash flow issues, vehicle issues, astrology issues as well as ghost issues. Sometime you have to move out of the fog. Your personnel can feel themselves slowly sinking in the quicksand. Rather then going down with the ship, the good employees see the handwriting on the wall and leave the quicksand. Your employees can easily see that they company is complacent and sort of stays level for many years. They don’t see opportunities being created. They hear the excuses and see the year to year procrastination and broken promises. I know many companies that tell me that they are looking into getting into IPM. They’ve been thinking about it for years. IPM has been around since the mid 1960’s and they are thinking about going in to it. They are researching it out. They are still spray jockeys. They want to become more professional. I converted an entire District (covering California and Nevada offices) to IPM in 1977. I did it in six months. From start to finish.

Some of the companies have told me for seven years that they want to diversify, but not just yet. Time is not waiting for anyone. The World Economy has gotten worse and worse. The good old days are gone. We have to work differently than we have in the past. We have to be more aggressive and have to learn to change our ways. We can no longer sit and wait for a sign from above. Let this article be your wake up call. It is time to get off of your assets and look at your company from above. Don’t just work IN your company. It is time to work ON your company. It is time to get out of your comfort zone and do things differently. It took a lot of guts to get into your own business. It was hard work and long hours. You took a leap of faith based on the belief that YOU could do it. It is time to renew that faith in yourself. You are not too old – you are wiser now. You have already learned what NOT to do. It is now time to look at what you CAN do and go out there and make those changes. (Play theme from Rocky here).

You are not only doing this for your self and your family – but you will be creating jobs and opportunities for others, as well. Don’t wait for “someday”. Someday may never come.

Nevada Pest Control Association News

By Lloyd Merritt Smigel Care Management Consultants

Today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday,” I’ve heard that many times. Talking and thinking and planning can be fun. DOING is another story. I have been in touch with several current and potential clients that are PLANNING to bring me out to help organize their companies and help them create a sales department. One of them has been “talking” to me about scheduling dates for me to come out for the past 5 YEARS! Can you believe that?

He really wants to do this but is looking for the right time. My belief is I will be retired for several years before he finds the PERFEKT time for him. These people are generally good people but time is eating them up.

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The miracles of science
The Nevada Pest Control Association is a great start and provides many opportunities for us to come together and build relationships and a sense of community in our industry. The National Pest Management Association is yet another example of the desire of companies to come together and strengthen their operations by cooperating, learning from one another, and forming useful alliances.

The benefits of this camaraderie however, extend well beyond political clout, or even a personal feeling of fellowship amongst peers. It is simply good business. It’s been said, ‘if you want to be incrementally better: Be competitive. If you want to be exponentially better: Be cooperative’. The old mentality was simply to out-compete everyone. Businesses shared nothing, fearing that their secrets or advantages would be stolen and used against them. The aptly-named ‘scorched-earth’ policy in which the winner takes all and leaves nothing for the competition has no real concern for the industry as a whole, but only short-term profit. But is there really a future for a competitive and uncooperative industry that already has so many aligned against it?

Political groups and activists are trying to make a name for themselves outside of the silver state. Businesses shared nothing, fearing that their secrets or advantages would be stolen and used against them. The aptly-named ‘scorched-earth’ policy in which the winner takes all and leaves nothing for the competition has no real concern for the industry as a whole, but only short-term profit. But is there really a future for a competitive and uncooperative industry that already has so many aligned against it?

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thank You to all the Businesses that supported the Association at the 2012 Pest Expo
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Nevada Pest Control Association News
Fungus beetles are commonly found around the hatches of rail hopper cars where spilled flour or grain has spilled. These beetles are strong fliers and are readily captured in light traps.

The Hairy fungus beetle (Mycetophilidae: Typhaea stercorea) are small oval beetles that can be confused with Drugstore beetles and cigarette beetles. They can be distinguished by the antennal club and a more "hairy" appearance. Hairy fungus beetles are found in a wide variety of habitats. They are strong fliers.

Fungus beetles can be found wherever fungus is present. Wet pallets that are brought into a warm building are a common source of infestation. Situations where commodities are shipped in sea containers where condensation occurs and drips onto the commodity often result in fungus beetle infestation. Infestations have been encountered in warehouses where water dripping from roof leaks has wetted stored commodities resulting in an infestation. In fact the author has encountered infestations resulting from mold growing on the structural elements of leaking roofs. Dried mushrooms are often found infested by fungus beetles.

Because all of these beetles are attracted to light, insect light traps are effective in detecting their presence. Fungus beetles are best controlled by drying out the infested area and discarding and infested food products. Drying pallets or switching to plastic pallets can prevent infestation. Heat treatments and fumigations have been used in cases of severe infestations. Heat treatments have the advantage of both killing the beetles as well as drying the moisture and eliminating fungus. Pesticide applications are rarely needed with these insects although in heavy infestations ULV treatments with pyrethrin materials can reduce levels of adults.
The Battle of the Bugmen - Continued from page 8

interest of the company, it still represents a very substantial amount of revenue that would now go to another local company. Copesan recently announced that at least the Las Vegas portion of this business (and possibly northern Nevada) will now go to Pitbull Pest Control, owned and operated by Joey and Bonnie Toth. This happened in large part because of the already existing relationship between Pitbull and Western here in Las Vegas and the ongoing desire of both companies to cooperate and work together. I can give many other examples of successful cooperation whereby companies we have relationships with either subcontract to or from us on various types of jobs. I also have friends working for other companies who routinely call me for advice on difficult jobs or even products and I always feel privileged to help. It’s been said that ‘all boats can rise on a rising sea’. I don’t foresee a time in which people will allow pests to infest their homes and businesses, therefore our industry will ever be ‘a rising sea’ on which all of us can rise. Try reaching out and connecting with other companies to learn from, teach and cooperate with. Use the association as a resource to meet and help others. You will be surprised at how it will enhance your business.

And, for heaven’s sake, let’s teach our technicians to wave to one another with all five fingers.
Some of you may remember a few months ago when the NDA conducted an online survey of our pest control industry. The intent of the survey was to gather comments from the industry about the NDA’s pest control program and to gain a better understanding of industry needs and opinions on important program topics. Primary Principals were asked to complete the survey and for the most part, the 101 companies that responded, they did. Overall, the responses were positive on topics related to the Department’s interaction with the industry and meeting the industry’s needs. A synopsis of the questions and responses are presented below.

Q. #4. How does your pest control company feel about the State’s pest control exams? Nearly 76% of the respondents gave this question the highest rating choice available of “Fair and applicable to the pest control category(s) my company is licensed in.” 14% stated the tests are “Too difficult and not relevant to the pest control my company does.” 10% felt the tests were “Not difficult enough to qualify someone to do pest control.” and 5% felt “The tests should be open-book.” None of the respondents felt there should be no license test. Most of the written comments given were in support of the current testing practice.

Q. #6. Instead of only being able to pay with check or correct cash, would your company find it beneficial to pay for tests and licenses with an ATM/debit, or credit card? 86% of the respondents indicated that being able to use a card to pay for services and purchases would be of “Some Benefit” to “Great Benefit”.

Q. #8. In addition to mailing in your annual pest control license renewal application each year, if given the OPTION of renewing your pest control license electronically and greatly reducing the time it takes to process and return your renewal licenses, would your company be willing to pay a reasonable convenience fee to renew it’s licenses on-line? The “Yes” response to this question by over 71% of the industry clearly shows a desire to have the option of renewing their pest control licenses on-line; 11% were “Not Sure,” and 18% said “No.” When asked if they would be willing to pay a reasonable convenience fee to renew their licenses on-line, 47% said “Yes,” 16% were “Not Sure,” and 37% said “No.”

Q. #9. Regarding the use of an ATM/debit and credit card, what do you think would be a reasonable convenience fee? This question had to be formulated in a manner that would incorporate a total convenience fee instead of separating out different fees for purchases and services, which proved to be too difficult. A little more than half of the respondents (54%) chose to answer this question, the others elected to skip it. Of those who answered the question, 84% favored the lowest fee offered of $10.00; 7% felt $15.00 would be reasonable, and surprisingly 9% believe a fee of $20.00 - $25.00 would be reasonable. This question sparked a lot of interest in the comment section. It is obvious by the written comments that there is some concern about what a “reasonable” convenience fee might be. The responses make us wonder if a fee lower than $10.00 would have evoked a greater favorable response toward adopting an ATM/debit/credit card system.

The following four questions refer to pest control company inspections and enforcement.

Q. #11-a. Has your company ever been inspected by the Nevada Department of Agriculture? Over 71% of the respondents stated “Yes” they had been inspected by the NDA; more than 27% said “No,” while 2% were “Not Sure.”

Q. #11-b. Did the inspection help your company to better understand the pest control regulations? 74% said “Yes” the inspection of their company by the NDA helped them to better understand the regulations; 14% said “No,” 12% were “Not Sure.” The answers show the NDA is successful in educating approximately three fourths of the pest control companies it inspects; but certainly would like to improve this number.

Q. #12. Has your company ever been subject to any written warning, cease and desist order, fine or other enforcement action? The intent of the question was to determine how many respondents in the survey had experienced an enforcement action by the NDA. Nearly 45% of the respondents stated “Yes,” while 53% said “No,” and 2% were “Not Sure.”

Q. #13. If your answer to question 12 is “Yes”, does your company feel it was treated fairly and the penalty was appropriate for the violation committed? Responses to this question have enabled the NDA to gain a better perspective of its enforcement role and the industry’s perception of it. Of the respondents, 83% “Agree” to “Strongly Agree” to being treated fairly. The second part of the question asked if the enforcement penalty the company received was appropriate for the violation committed. To this, 68% “Agreed” to “Strongly Agreed” with the enforcement action they received; whereas 32% “Disagree” to “Strongly Disagree” with it. This section received more than the standard number of written comments. Comments were somewhat mixed, but mostly positive indicating an understanding that inspection and enforcement are necessary.

Q. #15. Does your company believe the Nevada Department of Agriculture should open the testing to the public; those companies that do not have an NDA license? 49% of the respondents said “Yes” they would like the tests to be open-book, 13% felt the tests should be open-book, and 38% of the respondents said “No.”

Q. #16. What are some actions the NDA should be taking to improve the program? Approximately three fourths of the pest control companies it inspects; but certainly would like to improve this number.

Q. #19. Regarding the use of an ATM/debit and credit card, what do you think would be a reasonable convenience fee? This question had to be formulated in a manner that would incorporate a total convenience fee instead of separating out different fees for purchases and services, which proved to be too difficult. A little more than half of the respondents (54%) chose to answer this question, the others elected to skip it. Of those who answered the question, 84% favored the lowest fee offered of $10.00; 7% felt $15.00 would be reasonable, and surprisingly 9% believe a fee of $20.00 - $25.00 would be reasonable. This question sparked a lot of interest in the comment section. It is obvious by the written comments that there is some concern about what a “reasonable” convenience fee might be. The responses make us wonder if a fee lower than $10.00 would have evoked a greater favorable response toward adopting an ATM/debit/credit card system.

Saltcedar Leaf Beetle

This year a new beetle Diorhabda carinulata, the saltcedar leaf beetle, arrived in the Las Vegas Valley. This insect is a bio-control agent that was released on saltcedar (tamarisk) almost ten years ago in three locations in northern Nevada and one in central Utah. Saltcedar is a state listed noxious weed in Nevada that has choked a number of drainages in the West. Our species of the beetle originated in China (NV) and Kazakhstan (UT). After ten years of testing, it was determined that the beetles would feed only on saltcedar (Tamarix ramosissma). It may feed very limitedly on a related species that occurs in southern Nevada, the aethel tree (Tamarix aphylla). Anyone finding these beetles feeding on the aethel tree should contact me. This beetle (Fig 1) is a close relative of the common elm leaf beetle and can be separated visually from it by the smaller size and indistinct stripes. The insect has two generations per year and overwinters at the base of the infested trees. This is also where the first generation pupates.

As the larvae (Fig 2) of the beetle feeds, it defoliates the tree and somewhat disrupts the physiology of the tree causing the tree to turn a light to dark reddish brown (Fig 3) and to drop much of its leaves. This beetle has been shown to kill 50-70% of the saltcedar in an area after four years of defoliation. It was originally thought that the beetle would not be able to survive in southern Nevada due to the length of daylight during the summer. This controls when the insect goes into hibernation.

By Jeff B. Knight, Entomologist Nevada Department of Agriculture www.agni.state.nv.us

The beetle was not supposed to be released below the 38th parallel (about Tonopah), but beetles were somehow released in St. George, UT and have been able to slowly make it down the Virgin and Muddy Rivers. The original agreement was made to protect possible nesting habitat of a bird, the southwestern willow flycatcher.

You may have already received calls requesting control of this insect. While it is not illegal to spray for this beetle, it is the Department’s policy not to recommend control measures for this insect, since you would be protecting a state listed noxious weed.
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