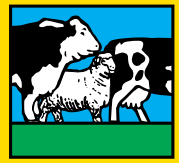


RED LEGGED EARTH MITE (RLEM) ALERT. (HALOTYDEUS DESTRUCTOR)

AgriCOTE
Pro-Tech[®]



“The CSIRO estimates the RLEM could be costing farmers over half a billion dollars in lost production....Mite numbers in affected paddocks are regularly reported as more than 120,000 per square metre – the same as running 1 extra sheep per ha” (Landline, Ian Henschke 24.09.00)

Identification:

- Eggs on underside of leaves orange in colour, 0.1mm in length.
- Eggs hatch when temps are below 20°C and rainfall is above 10mm.
- New hatchings are pinkish orange with 6 legs, 0.2mm in length.
- Laval stage 8 legs and resemble an adult.
- Adult have black velvety body with 8 orange/red legs, 1mm in length 0.6mm wide.
- Over-summering eggs can be transported by wind.



Blue oat mites have an oval orange/reddish mark on their back whilst Balaustium mite has short hairs on its body and can be 2 times the size of an adult RLEM. Correct identification is important when choosing the best chemical control.

Monitoring

- Commune in groups of up to 30 adults
- 90% of time can be found on ground moving to new feed source and 10% on plant feeding
- Active during April to November during this time 2-3 generations occur surviving 6-8 weeks.
- 3-5 weeks post sowing is critical.
- Morning or overcast days are best; the warmer parts of the day find RLEM on the ground.
- Damage appears as silvering or whitening of foliage.
- Will feed on all legumes, oil seeds, lupins, Ryegrass, and young cereals especially oats. Also Paterson's curse, skeleton weed, variegated thistle, ox-tongue, smooth cat's ear/flat weed and capeweed.

Control

- Movement of eggs in soil by livestock, farm machinery and transport of plant material.
- **Autumn**
Sowing with Pro-Tech[®] coated seed will give up to 6 weeks control, protecting germinating seeds and seedlings against this pest.
Pre-spraying bare earth which can give good control and can be harmful to beneficials
Post –spraying the 1st generation mites are best sprayed within 3 weeks of identification.
- **Spring**
Seek assistance of timing through www.timerite.com.au

An Integrated Pest Management approach is best, a biological control has been released (Anystis wallacei) and care needs to be taken not to spray RLEM to a point where it becomes resistant to spray and if controlling only RLEM chances are other mite numbers will increase. Crop rotation, Grazing management to open canopy and boarder crops can also be used.