

The Trimmed Line

A newsletter for the Commercial Horticulture industry of Osceola County

January 2004 - "The Trimmed Line" is a quarterly newsletter created to keep you updated on events and news that pertain to the commercial horticulture industry of Osceola County. Contact us if you wish to be removed from our mailing list.

DIAZINON UPDATE/Q&A

Happy New Year! This is the year that Diazinon will be removed from the market for residential uses. A December 2000 agreement with the technical registrants is phasing out and canceling all indoor and outdoor residential uses in order to reduce risks to children and other. Here are some answers to questions you may have.

Q. Why is Diazinon no longer being marketed?

A. A number of factors played an important role in Syngenta Crop Protection's (the manufacturer) decision to phase out diazinon over a four-year time frame. The phase out of diazinon was based on a thorough analysis of its financial performance. For the company, it was a bottom-line decision.

Q. There seems to have been a lot of discussion surrounding the decision to withdraw diazinon from the marketplace. Is diazinon safe to use?

A. The EPA did not ban diazinon, nor did it require the phase out. Syngenta Crop Protection approached EPA in 2000 to voluntarily withdraw the product from the marketplace and the EPA agreed. The EPA further decided that diazinon has adequate margins of safety for



continue labeled use for outdoor applications, and did not have concerns regarding a four-year phase out.

Q. When will diazinon no longer be available?

A. Retail sales will end December 31, 2004. People who have purchased diazinon can continue to use the product after 2004 until all quantities are gone.

Q. If Syngenta wanted to take Diazinon off the market, why did they have to work the withdrawal through the EPA?

A. Diazinon is an insecticide, and as such the EPA regulates it. The compound was undergoing reassessment, so the company needed to coordinate its withdrawal with EPA. The EPA also considered diazinon stakeholders, and a four-year phase out agreement was reached to meet those needs.

Q. Should I continue using diazinon?

A. Yes. Environmental assessments by the EPA do not raise concerns surrounding Diazinon's labeled use. Diazinon will remain on the market until the end of 2004, and consumers can continue to use the product after 2004 until all quantities are gone. Syngenta has worked very closely with EPA, the formulators and

retailers to ensure this planned market withdrawal is conducted in a smooth and orderly fashion. There is a formal agreement with EPA, and we expect no schedule changes.

If you have any questions, please contact Ken Gordon, Syngenta Crop Protection, 1-800-334-9481, ext 6416.

The Shelf Life of Stored Chemicals

Most of us have done it - partially filled a container that is carried over from one year to the next. The question then arises as to how long stored chemicals retain their effectiveness. Unfortunately, there is not a lot of solid information about shelf life of most materials. However, there is some useful information available.

1. Water based materials are usually damaged by freezing and may cause the container to burst. Freezing is usually not a problem in our climate but it can happen in the winter, the time of the year when one is least likely to be thinking about the pesticides. Some materials will begin to separate at temperatures below 40°F.

2. High temperatures will decrease the shelf life of many materials. Two examples are: Malathion WP, and Thiram WP. There is probably not much that can be done short of air conditioning to keep a storage area at the ideal temperature; however keeping susceptible materials away from walls may help.

3. High humidity may degrade some of the wettable powders. Keeping the containers tightly closed will help. (For safety reasons all pesticide containers should be kept tightly closed.)

4. Plastic containers tend to get brittle with age and can start to leak after they are 3 or 4 years old or if dropping or rough handling has dented them.

5. Labels can be damaged or falloff. If a container loses its label and the contents cannot be positively identified the material becomes toxic waste, which can be expensive and make disposal difficult.

If a material has been stored for more than 2 years or has been subjected to unfavorable conditions such as freezing, be sure to check it before you plan to use it if

you are not familiar with it, as it may have become unusable. Some of the things to look for are:

1. Wettable powders are lumpy, or the powder will not mix with water.
2. Dusts and granules are excessively lumpy. This will affect calibration and may also indicate that the material has lost effectiveness.
3. Emulsified materials have settled out or become lumpy.
4. Emulsifiable concentrates do not produce a milky emulsion when mixed with water, or some of the material has separated.
5. Oil sprays; the solution has separated or has formed a sludge.

The links below will take you to a table listing the shelf life of some materials.

<http://n-fl-bugs.ifas.ufl.edu/more/Guillebeau.htm>
http://ohioline.osu.edu/b745/b745_11.html
<http://pmep.cce.cornell.edu/facts-slidesself7facts/gen-peapp-shelf-life.html>
<http://entweb.clemson.edu/pesticide/saflyed/storage.htm#Web%20sites>

[D. Berger]

sudden death

The severe weather patterns that we have been having over the past 5 or so years have been taking havoc over some of our plants, including what we thought were healthy, well-established trees.

Before this past summer, we were experiencing many years of drought. Plants were becoming stressed due to the lack of water and many died. Some, however, were able to survive this stress by stretching their roots deeply into the soil in search of water.

This past summer, the weather changed and we experienced an over abundance of rain. Once again the plants became stressed, damaged, and some died following the extremes in rainfall.

Some of the plant deaths may seem sudden, almost like they died overnight. Dr. Ed Barnard, Forest Pathologist

of the Florida Division of Forestry, has some insight to the possible death of oak trees. "Oaks very well may be victims of root disease (either *Armillaria* or *Ganoderma*) and died because of the recent environmental stresses (drought followed by soil saturation; i.e., abundant rainfall this year). Both the drought and the excessive rainfall (the latter creating poor soil aeration) would induce "drought stress" on the trees. If the trees were in fact suffering from an impaired or dysfunctional root system (root rot) they would soon reach a point of "giving up the ghost". This is a phenomenon we have seen repeatedly over the years. "Local" site disturbance would exacerbate all of this. "

When asked if there is anyway to prevent these diseases from attacking the plants, Dr. Barnard stated, "The root diseases (listed above) are native and natural. They happen in response to tree condition, site disturbances, environmental influences, tree age, etc. There is no specific prevention or remedy other than to practice good arboriculture."

Therefore, the best way to keep trees from being attacked by diseases is to keep them as healthy as possible throughout their lifespan. Healthy trees can ward off diseases more than ones that are being attacked by pests or experience poor cultural practices.



CRAPE MURDER?

A Q&A taken from the archives of Chuck Lippi, Flagler County Extension Director

Q What is the correct way to prune a crape myrtle? I like to thin it out to allow movement of air, but let it grow up like a tree. This means never cutting it back. A mend of ours says always cut it back in the winter; that is the only way. I think both ways have merit.

A Your question brings up the big on-going controversy over crape myrtles. Generally, you are correct in doing some thinning but letting the tree be a tree in its natural form. I like to thin out the suckers so

there are only about three to five stems (trunks) so the multi-stemmed tree form is attractive and the beautifully colored bark on some varieties is visible.

The people who cut back their crape myrtles usually tell us the severely pruned tree will produce more flowers. Consequently, the University of Florida is on the third year of a three-year test of several crape myrtle cultivars. They pruned some severely (which we call topping) and others were left to grow in their natural form. The results during the first two years have been dramatic:

Pruning Method	No .of Flowers	Suckers
Topping	75	150
Unpruned	150	12

As you can see, the assertion that severe pruning promotes more flowers is false.

In spite of the research data, I am sure some people will continue hacking the tops off their crape myrtles and encouraging their neighbors to do the same. For those topping diehards, I will write an article this winter during the crape myrtle chopping time that demonstrates how to do pollarding --a European pruning technique that allows for severe pruning back to the same location on the trunk each year. It is an attractive horticultural technique that, unlike topping, is an acceptable pruning method. Topping on the other hand is not an acceptable pruning method. Finally, some people have to severely prune their crape myrtles each year because they are just too big for the location. This is what we call the wrong plant in the wrong place. There are cultivars of crape myrtle that have a smaller stature. Some grow to 6 to 8 ft. tall, others to 10 to 12 ft. tall, and so forth until you get to the varieties that grow to 20 to 25 ft. tall. Selecting the correct cultivar at the time of planting will help avoid the need for excessive pruning.

Asulox Enforcement Becomes Serious

DACS Bureau of Entomology & Pest Control has received reports that Asulox is being used illegally on residential turf. On November 26, 2003, the Bureau issued a letter to all licensees stating the following:

In 1995 an agreement was reached between EPA and the manufacturers of products containing asulam, the active ingredient in Asulox, prohibiting residential use. Until May of 1999, sale of existing stocks was allowed. After that date all labels of Asulox herbicides had to prohibit or remove residential turf uses. Products with a label that allow residential turf use can be used until exhausted. Transferring products from 'new-label' containers to 'old-label' containers is considered illegal. The Bureau is now in the process of obtaining Asulox purchase information from distributors and inspecting pesticide inventories at licensees to verify proper labeling.

Use of Asulox on residential lawns is considered a pesticide misuse and subject to fines up to \$5,000 per violation, and other disciplinary actions including license suspension and revocation. (Source: Letter issued 11-26-03 By DACS BEPC)

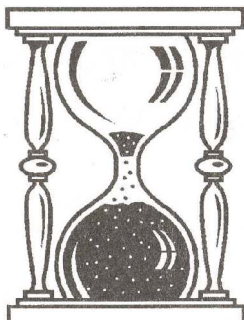
Expiring Soon? Get Pesticide CEU's Now.

Monday, Jan 26 Best Mgmt Practices
8am - 4pm Osceola Co. Extension
Call (321) 697-3000 for more information.

Thursday, Feb 5 Best Mgmt Practices
8am - 4pm Osceola Co. Extension
Call (321) 697-3000 for more information.

Saturday, Feb 21 Urban Farming Workshop
8am - 1 :30pm Seminole Co. Extension
Call (407) 665-5551 for more information

Get your Private Agriculture (growers) or Ornamental & Turf (golf courses, cemeteries, and parks) pesticide applicator licenses: February 12 @ Lake County Extension. Call (352) 343-4101 for info.



Become Certified in the Best Mgmt Practices

The Florida Green Industries, Best Management Practices (BMP) are landscaping guidelines jointly formed by cooperating professional organizations in the green industry, the University of Florida IF AS, and the FL Department of Environmental Protection.

The recommended turfgrass and landscape management practices were created in order to conserve and protect Florida's water resources. These practices include establishing new turf and landscape plants, maintaining existing turf and landscape plants, proper irrigation practices, nutrient management, and pest management.

Currently, these BMP's are guidelines and recommendations for landscape professionals. But, as time goes on and water becomes more and more of a limited natural resource, these guidelines may become laws. Get ahead of the race by learning the BMP's now. The BMP's work to create beautiful landscapes with proper and limited inputs.

The Osceola County Extension will be offering two certification seminars on the Best Management Practices. They will be held on Monday, January 26th and Thursday, February 5th from 8am to 4pm. By attending one of these seminars, you will become certified in the Florida Green Industries, Best Management Practices, be recognized by the University of Florida IF AS as a participant, and be listed on the Osceola County Extension web site (free advertising!).

Pre-registration is required. Registration fee is \$10, which includes BMP materials and lunch. Pesticide applicator CEU's are available. Please call us at (321) 697-3000 for more information.

Have a great year!

Jennifer Welshans, Horticulture Agent