Controlling Starlings and Pigeons at Dairies and Feedlots in Michigan Using DRC-1339

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During the winter large flocks of starlings gather at dairies and feedlots.

- Consuming and contaminating feed
- Contributing to the spread of disease
- Reducing milk production
Program Overview

• DRC-1339
  – Slow acting toxicant
  – Registered for USDA use only
  – Selective
  – Minimal risk of secondary poisoning

Methods-Prebait

• Site selection
  – Not accessible to cattle
  – Inside barns
    • Minimize non-targets
    • Shelter from weather
  – Prefer drive-thru style barns

• Producers conduct pre-baiting
  – Coincides with feeding of livestock
Notification

- Producers notify neighbors
- WS notifies several agencies prior to treatment date to alleviate concern about dead birds
  - Michigan Department of Agriculture
  - Michigan Department of Natural Resources
  - Michigan State University Extension Service
  - Local Health Departments
Methods - Bait Drop

• WS Responsibilities
  – Remain on site 4-8 hours
    • Monitor starling activity
    • Ensure non-targets do not interfere
  – Placed out the same as pre-bait
  – Clean up left-over bait

• Producers Responsibilities
  – Carcass pick up
    • Found in sheltered locations
    • Disposal by burial or incineration
Results

• Since 1998, 820 DRC-1339 applications to control starlings
• Average 45 farms treated per year
• Majority of farms experience >75% reduction in starlings
Effects of Starling Control on Milk Production at a Clinton County Dairy (700 Head)

![Graph showing the impact of starling control on milk production over time.]

**Keys to Success**

- **Pre-baiting**
  - Starlings need to be “on bait” for at least 3 days
- **Weather**
  - Cold, snowy, overcast weather preferable
- **Minimal distractions on day of treatment**
  - Avoid scheduling activities that may disrupt birds
    - i.e, construction, hoof trimmers, etc.
Pigeon Control with DRC-1339

• Pre-baiting
  – Similar to starlings, only use corn

• Hot bait/bait drop
  – Same

• Mode of action
  – Same, pigeons will expire at roost sites

Costs

• No federal funds for program
• Charge only for labor, mileage, and supplies (i.e, bait, toxicant)
• Farms < 1000 head of cattle = $650 per treatment
• Farms >1000 head of cattle = $1000 per treatment

• Additional cost to treat pigeons
  – $200-$400 depending upon number of pigeons
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