

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE USE OF THE AGRISENSE BLUE STICKY TRAP

THE BLUE TRAP:

Research has shown that a number of important pest insects are attracted to a range of specific colour wavelengths. These colours present stimuli to the insect which may elicit a number of responses ranging from host plant recognition to ovipositional attractant, sexual stimuli, etc. For certain species of thrips, one of the colours which has been found to be very attractive is a specific tone of blue. The AgriSense Blue Sticky trap has been designed to take advantage of this behaviour and has been found to be very effective for both males and females of a range of thrip species including the Western Flower Thrip (*Frankliniella occidentalis*) as well as other species of *Frankliniella* and other species. The specific coloured plastic of the trap is covered with a high-tech non-drying adhesive. The attracted insects land on the trap and are stuck fast.

Yellow traps are often used to trap these pests amongst others. However, the Blue trap has some important advantages. As well as the blue being more attractive for the thrips, it is also far less attractive to other species. This increases the specificity of the traps and avoids the complications of attracting non-target and in particular beneficial insects, which need to be preserved. The blue traps can comfortably be used in glasshouses etc. where beneficial insects are being released. Some insects are still caught but this is likely to be due to random contact.

ASSEMBLY AND PLACEMENT OF THE TRAP:

After unwrapping the outer covering, carefully remove the cover plastic from the glued area of the trap exposing the sticky surface. The trap should then be hung above the crop using the plastic coated wire provided. Attention should be taken to avoid placing the trap where the sticky surface can easily come in contact with either the plants or fittings. Dispose of the wrapping and cover plastic correctly.

WHEN TO USE THE TRAP:

It is important that the traps be placed in the crop early in the season before thrip populations start to build up to prevent the pest reaching epidemic proportions. While the traps work well when there are large numbers of thrips in the crop, by this time much of the damage has been done so the degree of crop protection will be slight. Trapping the first few pests, before they can multiply and do damage, is preferable whatever the situation.

HOW MANY TRAPS TO USE:

Where the traps are to be used for pest suppression in glasshouses, as a guideline, use at least one trap per 10 square metres increasing or decreasing the density in light of the severity of the problem.

If the sole purpose is to monitor pest populations, then traps can be used at a much lower density at 1 trap per 100 to 1000 square metres depending on the crop and the size of the glasshouse.

SERVICING THE TRAP:

The traps may be left in place until the trapping surfaces are covered with insects, but replacement, particularly in cases where a large number of pests are being caught, should normally be when two thirds to three quarters of the surface is covered with insects or after six weeks exposure, whichever is first. Out of doors or in dusty conditions, the traps may accumulate significant quantities of dust which will reduce their efficacy. Regular replacement is essential to maintain top performance.

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