

Controlling locust in dairying areas

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Emergency Operations Unit

This Primefact outlines the precautions to be taken when applying chemicals in dairying areas and management strategies that should be considered.

Under the *Biosecurity Act 2015*, landholders are required to report the presence of plague locusts on their land to their Local Land Services (LLS). They are also required to control locusts on the land that they manage. The application of chemical to control locust nymphs when the nymphs band together is the most effective form of control. Chemical is provided free of charge to ratepayers from LLS.

Check the chemical label

When spraying for locusts on dairy farms, check the label for the following information.

Grazing/fodder withholding period (WHP)

This is the time that must elapse between spraying the pasture/crop and when the cows can graze that feed or when the pasture/crop can be cut for hay or silage. The grazing/fodder withholding period is shown on the chemical label.

Export slaughter interval (ESI)

This is the period of time that cattle must be kept on clean pasture or feed, before entry to the milking herd, or slaughter for export, if they have been over sprayed (aerially sprayed) with the chemical or if they have eaten treated feed before the grazing/fodder withholding period has expired.

Export grazing interval (EGI)

Livestock that have been over sprayed or which eat treated feeds before the grazing/fodder withholding period for the chemical has expired must not enter the milking herd, or be slaughtered for human consumption, until the EGI has expired, unless they have been kept on clean pasture or feed for the duration of the ESI for that chemical.

Make a note of these intervals because they will be important for minimising the risk of chemicals contaminating meat or milk.

The biological control agent *Metarhizium* may be available for use in environmentally sensitive areas such as organic farms and areas of threatened species.

Note: The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) has issued permits to allow the use of certain synthetic pyrethroid sprays for locust control. All of the requirements set out in these permits must be observed. In the case of stock intended for export slaughter, these permits confirm the need to observe the relevant ESI or EGI, even if the grazing/fodder WHP has been met before the treated feed was first grazed or fed.

Further information on residues can be found in the [Locusts, grasshoppers and livestock residues brochure](#).

Manage the milking herd accordingly

Do not allow any cattle access to any sprayed pasture or crop until the grazing/fodder WHP for

the chemical used has expired. For example: if the grazing/fodder WHP is 28 days, then wait *at least* 28 days after spraying before:

- allowing cattle back into the paddock;
- conserving feed off the paddock; or
- cutting and carrying feed from that paddock to feed to cattle.

The chemical sprayed on the pasture or crop will be broken down during the grazing/fodder WHP. Hay or silage made from the pasture or crop may retain the chemical for long periods, so do not bale or ensile the pasture or crop before the grazing/fodder WHP has expired.

If paddock feed is limited because these pastures and crops have been excluded from the normal rotation, then feed the cows on a feed pad, loafing pad, laneway or sacrifice paddock. Obtain advice from your adviser or consultant on what to feed.

If a cow manages to enter a sprayed paddock or is accidentally over sprayed, then she should either:

- be fed on clean pasture or a clean feed source for the duration of the ESI; or
- meet the EGI for the chemical before her milk enters the vat or is used for feeding calves.

If dry cows graze a sprayed paddock before the grazing/fodder WHP has expired, or if they are over sprayed, then they must not enter the milking herd until they have met either:

- the ESI on clean feed; or
- the EGI for the chemical.

Plan ahead for the feeding of your stock

If there is a risk that a feed shortage could occur, plan now to:

- conserve feed (prior to spraying) that may otherwise not be able to be fed to the cows; or
- use previously ensiled fodder to cover the grazing/fodder WHP; or
- buy sufficient forage to cover the grazing/fodder WHP.

Discuss how much feed you will require with your adviser or consultant.

Organise a suitable feeding area if one doesn't already exist. This may be a sacrifice paddock,

laneway or yard. The area should not be adjacent to a watercourse or in an area where manure and effluent can reach a watercourse if it rains. Ensure the cows have access to drinking water and shade.

Contact your Local Land Services to find out which chemicals are available, so that you can plan ahead – remember, different chemicals have different WHPs and EGIs.

Chemical Use

All chemical users must comply with the laws governing the use of chemicals. The *Pesticides Act 1999* requires that all chemical applications be recorded in English and kept for three years. All chemical applicators must hold a current training qualification as specified by the Pesticides Regulation 2017 under the Pesticides Act. Only use chemicals that are registered for locust control or whose use for this purpose is allowed under a permit issued by the APVMA.

Each time a chemical is used, the *Pesticides Act 1999* requires that all of the label (or permit) be read or explained and that all label/ permit instructions followed.

Personal protective equipment and WHS requirements

Ensure that you follow all label directions on the use of personal protective equipment and any other work health and safety requirements.

Alternatively, consider using a contract sprayer who is already equipped to meet these work health and safety requirements.

More information

- NSW Department of Primary Industries - Locusts <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/locusts>
- Australian Plague Locust Commission www.agriculture.gov.au/pests-diseases-weeds/locusts
- Local Land Services www.lls.nsw.gov.au
- NSW Environmental Protection Authority <https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/pesticides>
- Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority www.apvma.gov.au

- [Locusts, grasshoppers and livestock residues brochure](#) on the Safemeat webpage
<https://www.safemeat.com.au/our-system/>

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© State of New South Wales through Regional NSW 2020. The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (December 2020). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that the information upon which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Department of Regional NSW or the user's independent adviser.