

Fire ant baits are typically created from defatted corn cob grit that is coated with soybean oil. The soybean oil, which is attractive to fire ants, has the active ingredient (the chemical that kills ants) dissolved in it. Worker ants pick up bait for food and carry it back to the colony where it is shared among the workers, queen and larvae. Fire ant baits are cost effective, require little labor, pose little toxic threat to people and control ants in an area for a longer period of time than contact insecticides.

Broadcasting baits reduces labor since the bait is applied over an entire treatment area instead searching and applying bait to individual mounds. This method also allows ants to pick up bait that may not have a mound that is visible. The majority of baits are spread at a rate of 1-1 ½ pounds per acre. When baits are over applied, there is no added benefit, it just costs more money. Tips for using fire ant baits:

- Make sure bait is fresh
  - Fire ants pick up bait as food; if bait is rancid they will not pick it up
  - Fresh bait should have a nutty or corn-like scent; rancid bait smells sour
- Apply bait when ants are foraging
  - On hot days, fire ants forage for food in the evening when it's cooler
  - To see if fire ants are foraging, place bait beside the mound & check back after 15 minutes to see if the bait is being picked up
- Broadcasting baits can save time by not having to locate each mound in the area
- Broadcasting can also help treat smaller mounds that may not be visible
- Baits applied at lower rates (1-2 pounds per acre) should be applied using a hand-held spreader set on the lowest setting
- Baits applied at rates higher than 1-2 pounds per acre may be applied using a push or drop spreader calibrated according to label instructions
- Make sure to read & follow all label instructions
- Do NOT get baits wet
  - We bait is unattractive to fire ants
  - Apply baits when rain is not expected for at least 24 hours
  - Turn off sprinkler systems for 24 hours after baiting
  - Apply baits after dew has burned off the grass



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