NATIONAL
Fire Ant Eradication
PROGRAM

Fire ant treatment update for organic properties



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The National Fire Ant Eradication Program is reviewing its treatment approach for managing fire ants on organic properties.

We confirmed that the fire ant treatment product used on properties certified as organic under Australian standards in targeted fire ant areas may be unsuitable. Two ingredients in the product—soybean oil and corn grit—contain genetically modified organism (GMO) material.

The National Standard for Organic and Bio-Dynamic Produce (the National Standard for export) (https://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/export/controlled-goods/organic-bio-dynamic/national-standard) prohibits GMO material, as do many private domestic organic standards. The active ingredient, S-methoprene, may be used on properties certified as organic under the National Standard for export, subject to conditions imposed by the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF).

Because the soybean oil and corn grit are not GMO-free, we have suspended treatment on all known organic properties while we source non-GMO alternatives. This action upholds organic industry standards and protects organic operators and communities from fire ants.

We are working with organic peak bodies, relevant authorities, and organic operators to assess and minimise any impact on certification. We also ask operators certified under private domestic organic standards to seek guidance from their certifying body, which is best placed to advise on domestic certification matters.

While we suspend treatment on organic properties, we continue treating non-organic properties. Maintaining eradication efforts is critical to eliminating this globally recognised super-pest.

For questions, submit an online enquiry (https://www.fireants.org.au/about-us/contact).