

Fire ant self-management

Fire ants are a problem that need a whole-of-community response, from businesses and industry, residents and all levels of government.

To reduce the impact this 'super pest' has on Queenslanders, the National Red Imported Fire Ant Eradication Program has introduced a self-management option. If you cannot or do not want to wait for the program to inspect and treat your property you can:

- purchase and spread fire ant bait on your property
- engage a pest manager to treat the property for you.

Baiting

A number of fire ant baits are available from local hardware stores and some chemical suppliers. Most of the baits that are on the market work very well in treating and suppressing fire ant populations when applied according to the product label instructions.

Small areas can be treated using handheld spreaders and larger areas using other equipment. The program does not endorse or recommend any particular product(s) or provide application or treatment efficacy information.

The active ingredients in baits that the program uses are indoxacarb, hydramethylnon, pyriproxyfen and s-methoprene.

The bait treatment is not harmful to humans or animals if used according to the conditions prescribed on the relevant product labels.

Pest managers

Pest managers are not employed by the program, but are trained in how to treat fire ants using the same techniques that the program's own pest management officers use.

These techniques can include Direct Nest Injection (DNI) using a liquid form of the insecticide Fipronil and/or baiting. The service provided by pest managers will assist in suppressing the ants until the program is able to complete eradication treatment in your area.

The pest managers will charge you a fee for this service and we recommend that you obtain a quote before proceeding. Please note that the program does not endorse any individual pest manager or the services they provide.

The treatments are a quick way of managing fire ants on your site.

Your general biosecurity obligation

Under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*, everyone, including individuals and organisations, has a general biosecurity obligation to take all reasonable steps to ensure they do not spread fire ants.

If you book a pest manager to treat your property they will inform the program about the result of their inspection and treatment.

If you decide not to engage a pest manager to treat fire ants or opt to disperse bait on your property, you are legally required to report the ants you have found.

Early detection of fire ants is essential to control the spread. Fire ants pose a real danger to Australia and could ruin our way of life, and have serious health and environmental impacts.

Everyday activities, such as barbecues, picnics and sporting events may no longer be possible in high infestation areas.

Australia is the closest any country has come to eradicating fire ants. Since its commencement, the program has eradicated five separate incursions of fire ants, including a population spread over 8,000 hectares at the Port of Brisbane.

For more information, to view the current list of trained pest managers or register for pest manager training, please visit daf.qld.gov.au/fireants, email fireants@daf.qld.gov.au or call 13 25 23.