

## New FOXOFF® Econobait production in full swing

After nearly fifteen years simplifying fox control programs across Australia, FOXOFF® has undergone a major facelift to keep it at the forefront of the war against Australia's most insidious predator.

FOXOFF® was developed in the late 1980's and early 1990's in response to huge lamb and catastrophic wildlife losses due to foxes.

The project not only involved developing a highly effective and canid specific bait matrix, but it revolutionised the methodology and thinking behind fox baiting programs nationally.

### Partnerships and Proven Technologies

Working with government agencies, farmer organisations, Land Protection Boards and Landcare groups across the country, a whole new system of fox control was developed.

ACTA's Managing Director Professor Linton Staples explained that the research that was involved in FOXOFF® was formidable.

"The early trials at Puckapunyal involved the laying and monitoring of hundreds of bait stations."

"These proved palatability of the matrix

against other common bait types including meat, liver, and lamb tongues," he said.

One of the main drivers behind the development of FOXOFF® was finding a matrix that did not require refrigeration.

"Having a shelf-stable product that would not go off or become mouldy before being used enabled thorough control programmes to be conducted over several weeks."

Professor Staples said that while the shelf stability of the product was a key advancement, removing the mess of field prepared fresh baits greatly simplified baiting programmes for farmers and land managers.

"With a bait that was proven to be at least as good as existing baits, but without the mess and contamination issues associated with fresh baits, farmers now had a simpler method available to attack their fox problems," he said.

### The proven matrix

Fifteen years on, the FOXOFF® matrix remains the same: tried and tested, proven simple and attractive for foxes to find and soft and easy to chew so it breaks down in the stomach quickly releasing its lethal dose.

All aspects of the bait were considered during

the lengthy R&D phase.

"As an environmental precaution, the matrix was designed to break down relatively quickly in the field through bacterial and mould action."

"This is in the event that baits that may have been moved or cached as part of a foxes natural behaviour - but not picked up by other foxes - would be rendered inert within a short period of time."

He explained this was to minimise risks to non target animals such as working dogs at the end of a baiting program.

"Regardless of this in-built safety mechanism, as a precaution, residual baits should always be retrieved at the completion of a baiting program and buried or burned," Professor Staples stressed.

### What's the new FOXOFF® Econobait?

Professor Staples described the new FOXOFF® Econobait presentation as another step forward in fox control options for farmers and land managers.

"FOXOFF® is now available as individually made baits in a range of new plastic pails with resealable lids including packs of 10, 20, 50, 100 & 200 baits," he said.

"The new presentations will help further simplify fox control programs."

**For more information contact ACTA.**



The new FOXOFF® Econobait pail range



# Product breakthroughs continue for ACTA

Another year of hard work by the ABT/ACTA team has led to the release of new presentations for FOXOFF® Econobait and MOUSEOFF® Bromadiolone bait and full registration for both RATTOFF® for use in sugar cane with an extended pack range, and ACTA 1080 Concentrate for field preparation of 1080 baits.

We have also progressed our major research programs via our R&D arm Applied Biotechnologies (ABT) and improved service to our rural merchant network in all states by the ACTA marketing and sales team.

The research and marketing groups together with our whole team in production must be congratulated for maintaining high standards of service and very high quality products that are well proven, well made and well presented.



A significant factor in the accelerated research effort of the ABT/ACTA group is the successful linking of our research resources at ABT with the newly established Cooperative Research Centre on Invasive Animals.

The IA-CRC links most leading agencies and some key private sector groups in Australia, New Zealand, the UK and USA and we are proud to be a principal commercial partner.

The CRC catch cry of 'Together we achieve solutions' welds well with our own mission of 'Excellence in Pest Animal Management Technologies'. Apart from helping to establish the CRC itself, we have made a considerable commitment to the CRC program in a number of major projects that will bring new technology to pest animal management.

Chief amongst these is the effort, co-sponsored by Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) and managed by Pestat Ltd, to explore the use of a possible new toxin for control of foxes, feral cats and wild dogs. The chemical, given the common name of PAPP, works in a similar way to carbon monoxide by preventing oxygen transport by red cells and thus is fast-acting and humane.

We have continued to develop a proven new pig bait called PIGOUT® that has achieved a vast improvement in targeting baits to feral pigs while reducing risks to native species.

A third area of work with the CRC is the RODENT RESEARCH program that aims to achieve better practical control of rats and mice in intensive crops and plantations, in industrial situations (such as grain storages, animal housing facilities and refuge sites) and hopefully increase options for rodent control on islands.

In recognition of my own inputs to several areas of animal science over the last 25 years of post doctoral research and industry development, the University of Queensland has recently appointed me as Adjunct Professor of Animal Science. It goes without saying that behind such recognition are the efforts of many team members without whom such progress could not be



**New larger production and dispatch facilities at the Somerton site.**

made. It is gratifying that a leading university has acknowledged practical work in solving industry problems and also the need for functional links between industry and academia.

## **Invertebrate pests**

While our traditional sphere has been vertebrate pests, we have made major progress with improved technology to control some of the most dangerous invasive ant species.

The fipronil based "Presto® Ant bait" manufactured with our proprietary matrix was successfully used, under permit, to save red crabs from yellow crazy ant supercolonies on Christmas Island and is being used to control infestations of these invasive ants in the Northern Territory, and Queensland. The project has now been extended as the ANTOFF® project to explore additional active ingredients with special environmental niches.

## **Website upgrade**

The new ACTA website @ [www.animalcontrol.com.au](http://www.animalcontrol.com.au) has been well received and a great source of on-line technical support for our customers. It is now receiving up to 1,600 hits a week!

## **Facilities upgrade at Somerton**

We have trebled the size of our facilities with a major building program expanding production areas for several major projects and to provide a dedicated freight and distribution logistics facility.

We hope to build our base with structural alliances that will enhance our service to industry and underpin the growth of the business locally and internationally with our existing partnerships and in-house technologies. Such links will allow even greater progress and achieve a world class resource for Australia and the region.

All this would not be possible without the continued support of the farmers of Australia and the various agencies and distributors with whom we work closely and who look to us for reliable and proven technology, products and service.

We thank them for the support in an increasingly price-sensitive market where back yard manufacturers seem able to register products with minimal research and development. The folly of this for regulatory authorities that wish to see high levels of product stewardship is not lost on key industry groups.

**Professor Linton Staples**  
Managing Director

# RATTOFF® ZP Sachets set to protect crops



RATTOFF® Zinc Phosphide Bait Sachets are now finally available to all cane growers to help control the rats in their crops.

After five years of R&D and testing under emergency and experimental permits the APVMA has now registered RATTOFF® for routine use by the cane industry.

ACTA's R&D Manager Michelle Smith explained that the development of RATTOFF® was successful due to the close collaboration between the sugar industry through the Cane Productivity Protection Boards (CPPB), Bureau of Sugar Experimental Stations (BSES), Queensland University of Technology (QUT) and ACTA.

"By working together we have found a solution to a major pest problem of the cane industry," she said.

## Availability

"Under the previous emergency use conditions, only a small number of Boards or merchants were permitted to stock RATTOFF® ZP sachets – now all stores and boards have access to the product," she said.

## Mode of action

Michelle described the breakthrough with RATTOFF® ZP is it's mode of action as a fast acting or 'acute' rodenticide and its ability to control a high proportion of rats in a crop within a few days of application.

"An acute rodenticide means the poison controls the rodents within a few hours after being eaten compared to traditional anticoagulant poisons that may take up to a week for a rat to succumb – during which time they are still gnawing at the cane."

## Reduced risk

She explained one of the other main benefits of RATTOFF® ZP is the greatly reduced risk of secondary poisoning of non-target animals and total lack of environmental residues.

"RATTOFF® ZP is ingested by the rat, the zinc phosphide in the bait reacts with the stomach acid and is converted to minute concentrations of toxin internally, the rats quickly succumb to heart and respiratory failure and usually go to their nests to die."

Michelle said the toxins quickly degrade in the carcass so the risk of poisoning another animal is much reduced.

"Birds of prey have little risk of being poisoned with RATTOFF®, unlike the higher risk second-generation anticoagulants - which are not approved for use in crops due to their potential for secondary poisoning and 'bio-accumulation'."

## New packs

ACTA's Marketing Manager Paul Crock explained that new pack sizes for RATTOFF® include 2kg, 5kg and 10kg pails, and should now be available through leading resellers in all sugar areas as well as through the Cane Productivity Protection Boards.

"The new packs give farmers more flexibility in their control programs – especially for smaller properties or very localised rat infestations," he said.

## Permit requirements

Before RATTOFF® ZP can be used in an area the local CPPB must verify the presence of rats to trigger a Damage Mitigation Permit for that area negotiated with QPWS. This overcomes the need for individual farmers to apply for separate permits for their crops and means that RATTOFF® is not used when there is no serious problem.

## Technical advice on rat monitoring

Paul explained CPPBs and BSES have skilled and experienced staff who can provide advice on identifying rat damage and ways to prevent and minimise rat infestations.

"There is a comprehensive rat management strategy for the cane industry that has been developed by BSES, QUT and CPPBs and we strongly support this approach. The use of RATTOFF® ZP is an important part of this IPM strategy and a free booklet is available from ACTA or suppliers to explain all rat management options in the IPM strategy," he said.

He encouraged store agronomists to help farmers monitor crops for fresh rat damage and for signs of rat activity such as active holes, signs of runways and visible rats.

Paul explained that RATTOFF® ZP Sachets are registered for controlling rats in cane crops and must not be used for any other purpose.

He said all leading rural reseller stores such as Landmark and CRT and NRI and most CPPB's now have RATTOFF® available.

**For technical or trade enquiries please contact Animal Control Technologies on (03) 9308 9688.  
[enquiries@animalcontrol.com.au](mailto:enquiries@animalcontrol.com.au)**



RATTOFF® ZP Sachets are now available to cane growers to help control the rats in their crops.

# Teak trees saved with RATTOFF® ZP Sachets



Damage to a teak tree from tunnelling rats. One application of RATTOFF® ZP Sachets saved \$4million worth of trees.

Teak plantation trees have been saved from annihilation by rats.

In a first for the new Invasive Animals CRC a four million dollar teak plantation was recently saved from annihilation by rats.

ACTA R&D Manager Michelle Smith explained that teak is a new plantation industry for far north Queensland.

"The climate and soils are well suited to this sort of forestry operation and offers a significant new agricultural industry for Queensland," she said.

"Teak trees are deciduous and after losing their leaves the trees store nutrients in the root system."

She explained that the roots can be found by burrowing rats common to sugar cane crops.

"The rats attack the root system of the trees, not only severely threatening or killing young trees, but even semi mature trees can be severely damaged," she said.

Industry pioneers, Integrated Tree Cropping, had a \$4million plantation at risk at the Ray Plantation near Cooktown and called for help from Animal Control Technologies.

Michelle said it was quickly recognised that RATTOFF® ZP Sachet technology might also work in teak.

"For a long term solution to the teak problems it was necessary to collect data on the rats and the effectiveness of RATTOFF® in teak plantations," Michelle said.

"The IA-CRC sponsored research link between Animal Control Technologies and the University of Queensland came into action and team members in Melbourne, Gattton and Brisbane were quickly able to respond to the industry call for help."

**"The trials were a spectacular success with a reduction in rats of approximately 90% within a few days of a single application of RATTOFF®."**

The trials were conducted in October with assistance from Integrated Tree Cropping plantation forester Kevin McDougal and his team at Cooktown and with special permits obtained from the APVMA and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service.

Kevin explained the trials were a spectacular success.

"We observed a demonstrated reduction in rats of approximately 90% within a few days of a single application of RATTOFF® ZP Sachets."

"The ability of the research team to respond quickly and the effective linking of private industry and university skills and capacity via the CRC program had enabled millions of dollars worth of trees to be saved with just a few kilograms of RATTOFF®," Kevin said.

#### Non-target impacts

A feature of the trial was to check for any unexpected non-target impact and none was found.

Michelle explained that one of the benefits of zinc phosphide was the lower risk of secondary poisoning.

"RATTOFF® does not leave residues in the environment or food chain making it a good option for broadacre control of rats," she said.

These results build on the successful control of large scale rodent infestations in crops and already the team has received requests for assistance from nut plantations, grain storages and intensive animal facilities, where rats and mice cause major problems.

**For more information contact ACTA.**



For technical or trade enquiries please contact ACTA:

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Teak plantations in Northern Queensland have been under attack from tunnelling rats.

# ACTA 1080 Concentrate gets APVMA green light



ACTA 1080 Concentrate will help in field preparation of 1080 baits for feral animal control programs

ACTA 1080 Concentrate has now received APVMA registration for the field preparation of baits containing sodium fluoroacetate or '1080' for the control of feral pigs, foxes, rabbits and wild dogs.

ACTA has developed this manufacturing concentrate to assist government agencies remove the OH&S risks associated with staff members mixing up liquids from 1080 powder.

ACTA 1080 Concentrate provides a consistent and high quality product, which will help improve the dose compliance of field-manufactured baits.

ACTA has received registration in the ACT, NSW, NT, SA, Tas, WA and Victoria after negotiations with the relevant state or territory 1080-authorized agencies.

It is now available in 200ml, 1lt and 5lt bottles for larger-scale pig baiting programs.

Concentrations of 1080 in field-manufactured baits vary, as each State or Territory has legislation and standard operating procedures in place detailing the pest species, bait substrates and concentrations permitted for 1080 control of pest animals.

ACTA has prepared a leaflet detailing all this current information, and authorised 1080 control officers are expected to prepare field-manufactured baits in accordance with their State or Territory requirements.



ACTA 1080 available in 200ml, 1lt & 5lt bottles



**Boards quick to take up liquid option**  
The Rural Lands Protection Boards across NSW have welcomed the registration of the liquid 1080 concentrate.

ACTA's Production Manager Ben Hall recently returned from delivering the first consignments of ACTA 1080 Concentrate to the boards. He said on the whole the Boards welcomed the new product and the technical back-up that ACTA has to support all its products.

"Most of the rangers welcomed the new concentrate as it promises to save them considerable time and effort in preparing their 1080 baits," he said.

ACTA provided special kits with the first orders of the concentrate that connect the ACTA 1080 bottles up with NJ Phillips dosing guns.



"It allows the rangers to simply take the cap off the poison bottle and connect their dosing gun without the need to decant the contents into another holder," he said.

The conversion kits for the NJ Phillips guns were well received by the Boards.

"This advancement is a welcome time saver."

**For more information about ACTA 1080 concentrate please contact ACTA on (03) 9308 9688 enquiries@animalcontrol.com.au**



Mal Leeson R Andrew Mulligan L of the Mudgee - Merriwa RLPB received the first consignment of ACTA 1080 Concentrate from ACTA's Production Manager Ben Hall.

# SA Mouse numbers a worry for Spring



Mouse numbers across the Northern Eyre Peninsula of South Australia point to a potentially very significant threat to crops in the region.

ACTA's Marketing Manager Paul Crock and Territory Manager Barry James recently returned from presenting a series of Mouse Monitoring Workshops in Ceduna, Wudinna and Kimba after field reports of higher than average mouse numbers.

Paul explained that monitoring sessions were well received by the farming communities, but unfortunately showed the situation to be very serious.

"The sessions were designed to help farmers learn monitoring methods for mice in crops and what the trigger points for actions should be."

## Wudinna

"We started the sessions in Wudinna showing farmers how to prepare and lay canola soaked 'bait' cards, run trap lines and identify and count active holes."

Paul explained that the traps used in the Wudinna example were poor quality wooden traps which did not accurately demonstrate the situation.

"We baited one trap line with cardboard soaked in canola oil and another with peanut butter. In both cases the bait was taken or chewed at, but the traps had not been sprung," he said.

Paul said that while the mice had eluded the

traps, they had taken, or chewed at the bait on 7 out of 10 traps.

"Had the traps caught mice it would have indicated 70% trap success and a serious problem requiring immediate baiting."

Another interesting point about the Wudinna site was the lack of activity on the bait cards, and apparent lack of any holes (- much less active ones).

"At first you could easily conclude that there was no real problem as the bait cards showed little or no activity and there appeared to be few if any holes," Paul said.

"The activity on the traps was integral in identifying the seriousness of the problems in the crop."

## Ceduna

To make sure the trap monitoring techniques would work new MOUSEOFF® Snap-E traps made by Kness in the USA were used in the remaining sessions.

"The new traps were simple to set, and proved highly successful in trapping mice and convincing farmers of the problems in their crops."

"In the first session in Ceduna we laid the trap line out and caught 8 mice in 10 traps with one other trap having been sprung but the mouse escaped."

"This result counted for 85% trap success highlighting a problem that required immediate treatment," Paul said.



**Worrying crop damage at Wudinna where the mice had taken the emerging seedlings back to their hole and chewed off the seed.**

"As in Wudinna, the canola soaked bait cards and counting active holes with talc underestimated the problems being faced."

## Farm visits

Paul and Barry visited farmers around the district walked the paddocks and helped identify signs of crop damage.

"In some cases we observed 10 - 20% crop damage in newly emerging crops," Barry said.

"The mice had gone along the press-wheel lines and dug-up and eaten the seed."

The farmers did their own monitoring using bait cards and the new MOUSEOFF® Snap-E traps in paddocks where they were sure they didn't have a problem.



**Ceduna trap results: 10 traps placed 10m apart along a 100m transect into the crop. 8 mice in 10 traps plus one sprung trap = 85% trap success**



**Worrying crop damage at Maltee near Ceduna**

“The bait cards at last showed activity, but in a paddock with no apparent mouse holes the trap results came back at 90% or 9 out of 10 traps with mice in them,” Barry said.

**Kimba & Buckleboo**

The last session was run north of Kimba on a property at Buckleboo. The farmers had baited areas that had suffered damage, but were sure they had the situation under control.

Bait cards were placed in an emerging oat crop (that was baited the day before), and bait cards and a trap line in the adjoining crop which was more established and thought not to have a problem.

A third crop paddock was also monitored where the farmer was very sure he had no problems with mice.

“The cards in the baited paddock were not touched, the cards in the adjoining crop were slightly chewed (5-10%) but traps caught 5 mice in 10 traps or 50% trap success,” Paul said.

“In the third paddock the results were extremely worrying.”

Paul explained that all the holes marked with talc powder had been disturbed by mice (and hence active), the cards showed from 10 - 70% chewing, and the traps returned 65% trap success.

To demonstrate how well established the mice were in the paddock, the farmers took to digging out one of the larger active holes.

“After considerable digging at least 40 - 60cm under ground level, the group found the mice,” Paul said.

“The best explanation heard from one of the farmers was ‘they came out of the hole like water out a pipe!’.”

The farmers counted 28 live mice out of the first hole, and proceeded to dig up a neighbouring hole less than 10m away to find another 14.

“This put the population in the paddock where the farmer was sure he had no problems at potentially 4,000 mice per ha.”

**Outlook for spring 2006**

The challenge for the Eyre Peninsula is to second-guess the direction of the mouse population over the coming months. The levels have already caused crop damage, yet the potential for the population to drastically increase in the spring has the potential to cause huge economic damage to crops.

“When our advice is to seriously consider baiting with 10% trap success, results observed point to a significant problem across the whole of the Northern Eyre Peninsula now,” Paul said.

Since returning from the trip, the area has received welcome rain, but not enough to flood the mice or cause a catastrophic population crash.

“Isolated rain events and even cold weather are not enough to cause a crash in the population.”



**Mouse monitoring results from Buckleboo:**  
**Top: Active mouse holes (one with 28 mice)**  
**Centre: Significantly chewed bait cards**  
**Bottom: 5 mice in 10 traps or 50% trap success.**

“Ceduna experienced nine consecutive frosts with temperatures well below zero, and yet the mice appeared fat and healthy,” Paul said.



**Farmers dig up a mouse hole at Buckleboo to find 28 healthy mice in a paddock ‘without a problem’.**

**MOUSEOFF® ZP**  
**In-crop mouse monitoring kits**

In response to requests for more information about monitoring, ACTA has prepared a monitoring kit to assist farmers and agronomists identify mice problems.



**Presented in a small tub, the kit contains:**

- 10 new MOUSEOFF® Snap-E traps;
- A tub of peanut butter to bait the traps;
- 3x30 page pads of canola soaked bait cards;
- 10 x MOUSEOFF® monitoring pins (480mm) to hold & identify bait cards in the crop;
- 1 x small bottle of talc powder for checking hole activity;
- 1 x MOUSEOFF® ZP Technical Booklet;
- 1 x MOUSEOFF® ZP Technical DVD;

**These kits are now available at cost from ACTA. For more information call (03) 9308 9688 enquiries@animalcontrol.com.au**

# Clear & simple spring fox control options

Landholders now have access to another tool to assist in their integrated fox control programs - this one through leading rural merchants without special permits.

DEN-CO-FUME® Carbon Monoxide Fumigant Cartridges have been used by government agencies and licenced pest control contractors over many years for fox control on public and industrial land and in urban fox control programs.



He said that active dens could be identified by the pungent smell of foxes, swarms of blowflies, fox tracks at the opening and often bones of prey discarded close-by. "DEN-CO-FUME® provides one of the best methods of spring fox control available."

## The true scale of the fox problem

Mr Crock explained that the key to realistic fox control was the adoption of integrated control programs including shooting, trapping and baiting with neighbours.

With new smaller pack sizes to suit the rural market, the DEN-CO-FUME® range is set to help simplify on-farm fox control programs this spring.

Animal Control Technologies Marketing Manager Paul Crock said that fumigating fox dens in the spring is another simple tool for farmers and land managers to use to help combat the fox problem.

"The DEN-CO-FUME® cartridges have proven highly effective in eradicating vixens and cubs in active natal dens," he said.

"DEN-CO-FUME® is easy to use - simply ignite the cartridge, place in the entrance to the den and cover any openings to contain the smoke."

"Foxes and cubs in the den are quickly overcome by the carbon monoxide slipping into unconsciousness and peacefully to death," Mr Crock explained.

"One of the challenges facing farmers is the sheer numbers of foxes living in their landscape," he said.

"Research has showed the fox population to vary anywhere from two to eight or more foxes per square kilometre."

He said in simple terms a population of four foxes per square kilometre equates to potentially 1200 foxes within a 10km radius of a given point.

"This is the true scale of the fox problem," he said.

"To combat lamb losses, farmers need to adopt integrated control programs using baiting, shooting, trapping and fumigating."

## Economics of integrated control

Since FOXOFF® has been introduced, wool growers and prime lamb producers who conduct regular FOXOFF® baiting programs



Fumigating fox dens with Den-CO-Fume® is a simple and effective fox control method.

have seen increases in marking percentages of 30% with some as high as 50%.

"The cost of a FOXOFF® program on a 1,000ha farm is about \$150.00 for baits plus the landholders' time in checking and replacing baits," he explained.

"The return in this small investment in time and effort is remarkable, and has been proven time and again."

Mr Crock explained that as FOXOFF® Fox Baits contained 1080, landholders were obliged to have completed a Farm Chemical Users Course and have a current 'ACUP' before obtaining baits from selected DPI officers in the state.

He said that DEN-CO-FUME® Cartridges did not require such permits and are available over the counter from leading rural resellers.

## Economics of fox control using FOXOFF® for sheep & wool producers:

### Example grazing property - 'Lambing Flats'

Property Size: 1000ha      Enterprise: 1000 breeding ewes

<b>Lamb marking % without FOXOFF® Program</b>	<b>90%</b>
Lambs	900 lambs
Income (assume lambs @ \$80.00)	\$72,000.00

<b>Lamb marking % with FOXOFF® Program</b>	<b>105%*</b>
(*Assuming a 15% increase in lamb markings, gains of 10 - 20% are common but gains of over 50% <u>have</u> been achieved following successful FOXOFF® programs)	
Lambs	1050 lambs
Income (assume lambs @ \$80.00)	\$84,000.00

<b>Increase in lamb revenue after FOXOFF® Program</b>	<b>\$12,000.00</b>
<b>Cost of FOXOFF® Program</b>	
FOXOFF® baits used 150 baits @ \$1.00	\$150.00

<b>Net result of FOXOFF® Program for 'Lambing Flats'</b>	<b>\$11,850.00</b>
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## FeralMone helps lure them in

Another tool in the fight against foxes and wild dogs is the newly commercialised synthetic lure FeralMone™.

Available in 150g aerosol cans FeralMone™ Spray Attractant is designed to assist with baiting and trapping programs.

Each can contains enough to treat 300 bait or trap sites.

The FeralMone Project is a partnership between Pestat P/L, Australian Wool Innovation and distributed by Animal Control Technologies.



For more information please contact ACTA on: (03) 9308 9688



# Bromadiolone range gets thumbs-up

Customers and resellers have approved of the new additions to the MOUSEOFF® Bromadiolone range.

ACTA's Marketing Manager Paul Crock said the new 200g and 400g plastic bottles have been well accepted and set a new standard in presentation of domestic rodenticides.

"The new child-safe plastic bottles provide a safer cost-effective rodenticide for use around the home and farm buildings," he said.

Chris Geisler, Landmark Merchandise Manager at Foster in Victoria, said that from a resellers perspective, the attractive packaging and added features give the MOUSEOFF® BD range a great point of difference to other products on the market.

"The bright packaging definitely adds value to our rodenticide display," Chris said.

"The red white and blue bottles stand out clearly on the shelves, while the sachet packs in their bright silver red and blue counter displays really help sell themselves."

Chris said one customer who had purchased a 400g bottle came in with a complaint about the attractiveness of the bait.

"Ian came in with the plastic bottle in hand, and complained that the rats had been so attracted to the bait that they had gnawed right through the plastic bottle to eat the bait inside!" he laughed.

"We could have sold him the chew through sachets at the time, but he opted for the chew through plastic bottle instead!"



The MOUSEOFF® BD range includes 100g & 200g sachet packs, 200g & 400g bottles and 2kg and 8kg plastic pails.

Ian explained that he too was surprised that the rats had gone to the trouble of gnawing into the bottle.

"It was a pretty fair effort considering the other food available in the shed and lots of other rigid plastic items to eat," Ian said.

"I was quite impressed - it clearly demonstrated the attractiveness of the MOUSEOFF® Bromadiolone Bait, but more importantly the fact there are no more rats around showed it was also highly effective".



The chewed through MOUSEOFF® bottle



The MOUSEOFF® chew through sachets are proving very popular at a retail level.

## MOUSEOFF® BD demonstrates palatability and attractiveness

This year, higher than normal numbers of mice have been reported on the Yorke and Eyre Peninsulas of South Australia. In a recent visit to Ceduna, MOUSEOFF® Bromadiolone was placed in a shed with significant mouse problems to demonstrate its attractiveness and palatability.

The sequence of photographs below clearly show that in the presence of other food sources (and bait types) that MOUSEOFF® BD proves both attractive to mice and highly palatable.



MOUSEOFF® BD bait placed out at 9.56am



Mouse onto MOUSEOFF® BD bait 10.10am



Mice into MOUSEOFF® BD bait 10.27am



Mice eaten all MOUSEOFF® BD bait (approx 20-30g) by 1.56pm

Photos: Paul Crock

# Islanders tackle Rabbit problems



*The Landcare group has been active in removing rabbit harbour where possible and baiting to knock numbers where harbour can't be removed.*

The Bass Coast Landcare Network and local residents have undertaken an extensive rabbit baiting program on Phillip Island through Network's Urban Landcare Program.

The Bass Coast Shire Council supported the project by provided funding to landholders to purchase RABBAIT® Pindone Oat Bait and to engage contractors. The areas targeted on the island were in Cowes, Ventnor, Silverleaves, Cape Woolamai and Smiths Beach.

Matt Stephenson, the Pest Plant and Animal Programs Officer with the Landcare group said that it was important to have committed landholders involved in rabbit control projects.

"It is hoped that with the recent success of our program – other landholders in urban areas will join the party and assist those that are currently engaged in baiting work."

He explained that rabbits on Phillip Island are found living under holiday houses and in scrub – so the impacts of ferreting and other control techniques on rabbit numbers are negated.

"The rabbits dig up gardens and lawns and are beginning to encroach on grazing land that adjoins urban areas," Matt said. Local resident Tom Goode has encouraged over 30 of his neighbours to control rabbits by using RABBAIT® in the Ventnor area.

"With a committed approach from the whole district we can put a huge dint in rabbit numbers," Tom said.

"We have noticed that in some foreshore areas rabbits have been reduced from around 200-220 in a given section each night to only 9 or 10 rabbits."

He explained the reduction was quicker than expected and within a couple of weeks it is noticeable.

"RABBAIT® really does work."

"It is simple to use – you just need to put the time into a program for a few weeks – but the results are obvious," Tom said.

Matt explained their challenge was to get the message out into the community.

"We receive a lot of complaints about rabbit numbers on Phillip island but the frustrating thing is to get people motivated and involved to do something about it."

**"In some foreshore areas rabbits have been reduced from around 200-220 in a given section each night to only 9 or 10 rabbits."**



*Rabbits on Phillip Island have been targeted by the local Landcare community in integrated baiting programs across the Island.*

He said baiting is simple and has proven to have a tangible impact on rabbit numbers.

"I think people just need to support their neighbours and give it a go."

"There is no point in 10 percent of the landholders trying to control 100 percent of the rabbits – even 30 or 40 percent of the landholders getting involved with a RABBAIT® baiting program could wipe rabbits off Phillip Island" Matt said.

**For more information about the Phillip Island Rabbit Action Program contact Matt Stephenson at the Bass Coast Shire on (03) 5952 5123**



## **RABBAIT® 1080 Oat Bait**

There has been considerable comment in the press recently relating to the use of 1080 oats for large-scale rabbit control programs in lieu of carrots where 1080 is an option.

RABBAIT® 1080 Oat Bait has been available for some years, however with the Victorian DPI decision to move away from field manufacture of baits, farmers and land managers in the state are now seeing the 1080 option in the RABBAIT® Range for the first time.

Feedback has been very positive, but as with any new technique, we would like to encourage those that don't believe oats are as good as carrots to closely follow the directions and give it a go.

**For more information about RABBAIT® 1080 Oat bait please contact ACTA on (03) 9308 9688**

# PIGOUT® waits for registration

PIGOUT® the new bait for feral pig management has progressed to the registration phase with the submission now being reviewed by the APVMA.

Professor Linton Staples explained the PIGOUT® development is one of the fastest moving research projects ACTA has ever been involved in.

“PIGOUT® is a major step towards a more streamlined approach to pig management and hopes to provide a major reduction in the enormous agricultural and environmental damage caused by feral pigs in Australia,” he said.

PIGOUT® has been developed by ACTA/ABT and the IA-CRC team through the support of Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) and the Feral Animal Program administered by the Bureau of Rural Sciences (BRS).

“The ACTA/ABT team developed some 30,000 prototype baits which the IA-CRC team used for field testing,” Linton said.

“We would particularly like to acknowledge the efforts and collaboration of Project Manager Dr Steve Lapidge and PhD student and veterinarian Brendan Cowled and ACTA’s Michelle Smith who have made a phenomenal contribution to the extensive field testing of efficacy and non-target safety for the product.”

One of the many startling research results with PIGOUT® has been the very low rate of uptake by non-target species, even when they directly encounter a bait in the field.

“Steve and Brendan used remote triggering cameras to monitor animals at bait sites.”

“Hundreds of images were collected that clearly showed many different animals approached bait sites and the test baits but did not eat them,” Linton said.



**A boar eats a prototype PIGOUT® Bait in testing**

The thorough research efforts of the IA-CRC team combined with a wide range of inputs from nearly all state agency and conservation staff, analysts at DNRM Qld, aerial contractors and land owners, have delivered remarkable results.

“The data has been collated into the regulatory submission with assistance from Dr Simon Humphrys at the IA-CRC and Julia Rudolph at ABT,” Linton said.

“The product is now undergoing APVMA review in the lead-up to being registered and released in the near future.”

### Further developments

Research is also underway to extend the use of the PIGOUT® bait to deliver possible new toxins and also vaccines to pigs to provide a strategic solution to the risk posed by pigs for exotic diseases that could otherwise cripple Australia’s grazing industries.

**For more information about the PIGOUT® Project please contact ACTA on (03) 9308 9688 or [enquiries@animalcontrol.com.au](mailto:enquiries@animalcontrol.com.au)**

**The new PIGOUT® Feral Pig Bait**



**Some of the 30,000 prototype PIGOUT® Baits ready for dispatch from the ACTA Somerton facility for the extensive field trials conducted from Cape York in the north to Kangaroo Island in the south.**



**Proven uptake of PIGOUT® Baits in the field.**

# Collaboration for control & monitoring of rodents

The ABT/ACTA group is responsible for a key rodent research program within the CRC. For this work we are delighted to welcome the collaboration of Dr Luke Leung and his rodent team at the University of Queensland (UQ) facility at Gatton.



The rodent research project with UQ has three key objectives:

Firstly, we seek to improved methods for monitoring and the control of rats and mice around industrial areas such as refuge sites, food processing plants, grain storages and intensive animal facilities.

A second priority is to improve the management of rodents in intensive crops.

This area builds on our previous successes in managing rats in sugar cane crops and tree plantations and the control of plague mice in most broadacre crops.

The third area of activity is the improvement of methods to manage rodents on islands, where the damage caused to nesting sea birds and other wildlife is considerable. Achieving safer methods of rodent management while decreasing "collateral" damage to native species is a feature of the program.

The project now seeks trial collaboration and project operational funds or "in kind" contributions from industry groups who will directly benefit from the new innovations and registered solutions to rodent problems.

This will supplement the seed funding from the IA-CRC program and ensure that the work we do is precisely tailored to providing the solutions that industry wants.

The ABT/ACTA-UQ team is now one of the most outcome-focused rodent research teams in



Some members of the rodent team at the island meeting hosted by ABT in Melbourne recently.

Australia and has already achieved success in saving a teak plantation from rat damage.

With project management from Linton Staples, the research effort at ACTA is led by rodent biologist Michelle Smith and at UQ is led by Dr Luke Leung.

Dario Rivera, who is known in north Queensland for his excellent work on the role of rats in the spread of leptospirosis, has joined the team, and Jennyffer Cruz-Bernal has been supported by an ARC student scholarship to conduct a PhD in rodent control and monitoring.

The appointment of a research officer in Melbourne will complete the core team and we now welcome requests from industry groups who require our assistance.

**For more information contact ACTA.**



The new rodent team will work closely with Industry to develop better rodent management innovations.

## New MOUSEOFF® Snap-E Traps added to ACTA rodent range

Since the demise of the Australian made Standfield Supreme Mouse Trap, we have been often asked if we carried or knew of good mouse and rat traps.

We have scoured the world looking for a high quality reliable trap, and that is exactly what we have come across in the Kness Snap-E Trap.

Kness has allowed ACTA to market these high quality traps under the MOUSEOFF® Snap-E Trap brand. These traps proved the best for our field trials on the Eyre Peninsula, and now feature in the MOUSEOFF® ZP Monitoring Kits.

The solid plastic base and innovative trigger mechanism make the traps simple to set and deadly, as can be seen from this image from Buckleboo in South Australia.



The new MOUSEOFF® Snap-E Traps are lethal.

The traps are available in the monitoring kits or in packs for retail sale.

**For more information about the MOUSEOFF® Snap-E Traps please contact ACTA on (03) 9308 9688 or email: [enquiries@animalcontrol.com.au](mailto:enquiries@animalcontrol.com.au)**

## DOGGONE® Soars to new heights

Having secured registration for DOGGONE® Wild Dog Bait in WA last year, a large consignment is headed into the Kimberly for use in aerial baiting campaigns.

DOGGONE® has now been successfully used in aerial campaigns in Queensland, and now WA on the basis that the savings to aircraft time and ground crews makes the bait a truly realistic alternative to traditional wet meat baits.

ACTA's marketing manager Paul Crock explained that some councils in Queensland had been able to cut days off their aerial baiting programs.

"One shire was able to cut two days aircraft hire, plus the staff time," he said.

"The ground crew were happy as all they did was pull the lids off the pails and tip them into the hopper - with no mess and no fuss."

Paul explained that people wanting baits for aerial use need to specify this on the order as the baits are pre-cut at the factory.

**For more information about DOGGONE® for aerial use please contact ACTA on (03) 9308 9688**