

Py-Bo Technical Report

CROP	Soybean
PESTS	Helicoverpa spp (Heliothis) Monolepta, Loopers

DATE: January 2001

ORGANIC PRODUCER: Tony Huth, Norwell

DISTRICT: Beenleigh, Coastal SE Qld

CROP STAGE: About 8 weeks old, 600mm + high, drought and insect stressed .

PEST PROBLEM: The Heliothus larvae were 15mm to 20mm, the loopers were 20-25mm, the Monolepta beetles were in patchy 'swarms'.

LIKELY HARVEST PROSPECTS: It seemed unlikely there would be a harvest without intervention. Leaves were stressed by the loopers, the hearts were eaten out by the Heliothus and the flowers by Monoleptas.

PILOT TEST: Thursday 4th January 2001

PEST NUMBERS Heliothus were 6-8/metre, loopers 8-10/m, monolepta 50-100/plant

EQUIPMENT: 900 litre tank with boom, fan jets set to the rows.

DILUTION & APPLICATION RATE: A test 50m run was done @ 0.5ml/L at 300L/ha. Another run was sprayed at 400L/ha. Because both tests were done just on dark, evaluation was made next morning.

ASSESSMENT: At 300L/ha, all loopers were killed, 90% of the monoleptas and 70% of the Heliothus. At 400L/ha, All loopers were killed, 100% of monoleptas and 90% of heliothus.

THE DOLLARS: To get all the Heliothis, the crop was treated at 1ml of Py-Bo to 1litre of water or, 900ml in the 900L tank. The spray cost of 13.2 cents/L applied at 400L/ha means the cost was \$52.80/ha. If soybean at the farm gate is say, \$450 per tonne, the treatment had to save just on 120kg/ha of soybeans to break even. The yield in fact was 2 tonne/ha and could have been about 20% higher because, after treatment, side shooting occurred and some of the best pods were too low to be harvested.

SUMMARY: Tony will be watching his next crop for earlier signs of insect development and will not let the hearts be attacked before deciding to treat. Beneficial insects and flocks of crows were unable to contain the pest population explosion in 2001. The Py-Bo natural pyrethrum spray reduced the potential damage within an hour or so. A follow-up spray was contemplated to control green vegetable bugs, however, being only a week or so from harvest and with crows doing a fair job, Tony decided against it. Next season, he might use hollow cone nozzles to get smaller droplets so there is some swirling to get the hidden larvae.

Phone Ion Staunton for helpful
advice on your pest problem...

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