

# QA AND ASK THE EXPERTS

## **Q:** How can growers evaluate different products for woody ornamentals?

**A:** All growers should be evaluating their own programs and products to ensure they are delivering expected results. It does not matter if they are woody ornamentals or any other crop. Evaluating new products is always important to determine if there is improved control – or not. Phytotoxicity, or preferably the lack thereof, is also important to evaluate. In a research greenhouse or nursery, a researcher will normally have an untreated area to compare the treatments. This is a tough sell for a commercial grower, so the best way is to compare a new product with the existing program. Most companies are always looking for interested growers to help them in evaluating new products or perhaps a new use for an older product. Probably the best place would be to contact your local sales representative or go to the company's web site.

## **Q:** What is the Thrips Cocktail and how is it used?

**A:** The term Thrips Cocktail was coined late in the last century and as some of you may know a "cocktail" is a blend of more than one ingredient. Why a Thrips Cocktail, which is essentially a pesticide rotation guide? At the time the thrips cocktail term was coined, there were very few effective products for thrips control, and growers tended to over use an effective product, leading to resistance. The "Cocktail" was produced to help growers design a pesticide rotation program for thrips management. Has the situation changed? There still are relatively few products that work well on thrips, and a "cocktail" of products still makes sense for developing a rotation. There may be other thrips management programs out there, but the Thrips Cocktail one can be found on the OHP.com web site ([www.ohp.com](http://www.ohp.com)).

## **Q:** How can using a different mode of action improve a crop?

**A:** Good management practices, whether for disease control or insect control must utilize a balanced approach. One of the main goals in any program should be efforts to reduce or minimize any build up of resistant populations of diseases or insects. By using different modes of action (MOA) growers are likely to achieve better overall solutions and hence prevent or minimize damage to their plants. All this translates into better plants, or at least a better chance of producing them.

There are many theories as to how often the MOA should be changed. In the real world, common sense plays a big part and knowing that a pest is receiving the same MOA too often will cause problems. Many, if not most product labels will have resistance management directions on them. Newer labels now contain the MOA group. BASF and OHP produce chemical MOA charts, available in print and on the company web sites.


## **Q:** What are OMRI listed products and how will these impact my growing operation?

**A:** OMRI is the Organic Materials Review Institute. As the name indicates, OMRI reviews and approves products and processes to determine if they are suitable for organic production, handling or processing. The OMRI organization bases its standards on the USDA's National Organic Program (NOP), and works closely with the NOP staff and all USDA accredited certifying agencies. If a product label contains the OMRI logo, it means that OMRI has reviewed the components in that product and that they comply with the NOP standards. More information can be found at [www.omri.org](http://www.omri.org) and [www.ams.usda.gov/nop/indexIE.htm](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop/indexIE.htm). Growers wishing to produce organic crops must use only OMRI and/or USDA Organic-approved products.

## **Q:** If growers use chemical injectors or are looking to buy one, are there considerations about the products that will run through it?

**A:** If growers are going to inject acids, line cleaning chemicals, water sanitation products or harsh chemicals they must be aware of the compatibility of these products and the construction of their injector. Many companies will offer "special" bodies at additional cost for use in these applications, although there is one that offers a standard body which will be suitable for use with all products. Growers should check with the manufacture of their injectors to ensure they are suitable for this use.

Growers also need to know what rate of injection will be needed for the various products they intend to use. Injection ranges maybe from 1:100 to 1:4000 to apply these types of products. In most cases a single injector won't offer this wide a range of injection and will require using two injectors in series employing a remote injection system to inject two different chemicals into the outgoing water line at the same time. This can be done by some injectors but not all. Lastly it is very important to have the right size injector for the job. It should be correctly sized to the incoming water line. Growers should check with their injector manufacture for assistance.



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