

XSIT



Enhanced Manual SIT Release Mechanism

The two main platforms for commercial SIT moth release are by helicopter or by hand. Hand releases are mainly used where orchards are covered by nets (which is on the increase), or where the immediate area covered is too small to deploy releases by means of a helicopter. By **Rob Elfick**



Rob Elfick

To date, commercial SIT moth release by hand has been done from petri dishes that were used to deliver moths to specific pre-calculated positions within the orchard.

This method has now been replaced with an improved manual release method designed, manufactured and tested with the assistance of an engineering company in Gqeberha (Port Elizabeth).

This improved release unit mounts on the front carrier of a quad bike. And, not only does this method ensure a continuous release of moths with improved distribution, the quad bike is also fitted with a variable speed drive connected to its rear axle. This allows for an adjustment in the moth quantity being delivered to match the variation in the speed of the quad bike. A total of 12 units have been deployed covering all areas, and excellent results have been obtained thus far.

RB - Registration of SAGA™ Ant Bait

River Bioscience firmly believes in integrated pest management (IPM) and its successful implementation relies on having access to a variety of tools, to ensure long-term

environmental sustainability and food safety. Our producers are subject to various levels of food safety requirements, including phytosanitary pests and residue levels, setting a massive balancing act to manage market access and fruit quality.

Mealybug outbreaks are costly to control and pose a significant market access risk. A bio-control programme for mealybug has two main considerations: the impact of foliar applications, and whether there is a large number of ants in the tree canopy. Both can be detrimental to gaining control of mealybug.

The importance of ant control in managing honeydew producing pests like Mealybug, is re-emphasised every year at the CRI IPM workshops. Current control options include the use of chemical applications either as a stump treatment or an ant bait in the form of granules. A current limitation to Global

GAP compliance for producers is the lack of products that have been registered for the control of both pugnacious and brown house ants. Nearly 10 years ago CRI researchers embarked on a research project to develop a product that addressed this, and the result is the new River Bioscience product SAGA™, which is a registered product with Act 36 of 1947 for use against both types of ants.

As proud members of the CGA, SAGA™ has been developed by industry bodies to assist our shareholders with achieving effective pest control in a compliant and sustainable manner that does not negatively impact beneficial insect complexes in the orchard. 🍌



The improved commercial SIT manual release method has a unit that mounts on a quad bike, and allows for adjustment in the moth quantity being delivered to match the variation in the speed of the quad bike.