

C2-P

COMPARING THE PRESENCE-ABSENCE SAMPLING TECHNIQUE TO A FIVE MINUTE SEARCH FOR WEBSPINNING SPIDER MITES

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The presence-absence sampling technique for web spinning mites is a useful method of determining need for treatment and reduces likelihood of treating without justification. However, very few Pest Control Advisors (PCAs) use this technique because it is too time consuming. A “Five-minute search” monitoring technique, similar to what Pest Control Advisors (PCAs) currently use with a rating system added, was evaluated in 2001 and 2002. Results were then compared with the presence-absence technique to determine if any correlation between the two could be made. The “Five-minute search” monitoring technique for web spinning mites was performed in the same area of the orchard as the presence-absence technique, but the “Five-minute search” was conducted first so that scouts would not be influenced by the results of the presence/absence technique. The new monitoring technique involved looking for symptoms of web spinning mites, as well as, looking at individual leaves with a hand lens to evaluate mite predator and web spinning mite populations. The rating system included six categories that were assigned a numerical value for web spinning mites (none, low, low/moderate, moderate, moderate/high, high) and three categories for mite predators (low, moderate, high). There was a high correlation $R^2 = 0.63$, $p > 0.01$ in 2001 and $R^2 = 0.84$, $p > 0.01$ in 2002. The development of a technique similar to what is already used that is reliable, can be quantified, quickly assess population levels and make treatment decisions will be easier to implement.