

German Cockroach Pheromone (029028) Fact Sheet

Summary

German cockroach pheromone is added to cockroach bait stations to help attract the roaches to the toxic chemical inside the station. Use of these bait stations is not expected to harm humans, pets, or wildlife.

I. Description of the Active Ingredient

German cockroach pheromone is a mixture of chemicals produced by cockroaches that attracts additional cockroaches for mating. Researchers extract the pheromone from cockroach droppings. The resulting extract contains more than 150 different chemicals; scientists do not know which ones are the actual attractants. The cockroach pheromone is approved for use in bait stations, which, in addition to the pheromone attractant, contain a substance that kills cockroaches. The pheromone increases the effectiveness of the bait station by attracting more cockroaches to the station than when food is the only bait.

Many animals and plants produce pheromones, which are usually volatile chemicals with strong odors. Organisms produce pheromones in order to modify the behavior of other members of the same species, for example, to attract mates or to discourage individuals from crossing territorial boundaries. In general, each species produces its own specific pheromones.

II. Use Sites, Target Pests, and Application Methods

- **Use sites:** Bait stations containing the pheromone can be used virtually anywhere indoors. Approved sites include homes, restaurants, health care facilities, schools, factories, offices, garages, cars, zoos, and kennels. Consumers can purchase these bait stations in retail outlets such as supermarkets and home supply stores.
- **Target pests:** The only known biological effect of the German cockroach pheromone is its ability to attract German cockroaches, a species commonly found in kitchens and bathrooms throughout the United States.
- **Application methods:** The pheromone is part of bait stations that can be placed anywhere indoors.

III. Assessing Risks to Human Health

For the following reasons, no adverse human health effects are expected from use of German cockroach pheromone in bait stations. Based on tests on this and other insect pheromones, there is no evidence of mammalian toxicity from amounts much greater than people would encounter from these bait stations. Furthermore, both the pheromone and the accompanying toxic chemical are attached to the inside of the plastic bait station. As a

result, adults, children, and pets are not expected to be exposed to the pheromone or the toxic chemical.

IV. Assessing Risks to the Environment

No harmful environmental effects are expected because a) the bait stations are approved only for use indoors, b) there is virtually no exposure to any species except the German cockroach, and c) the pheromone is not known to be toxic.

V. Regulatory Information

German cockroach pheromone was registered (licensed for use) in 1996. As of February 2000, there was one pesticide product with the pheromone as active ingredient.

VI. Products Directed Against Public Health Pests

EPA defines a public health pest as any organism that can cause or transmit human disease, or can cause human discomfort or injury. Examples include cockroaches, germs, mosquitoes, ticks, and rats. To help protect the public's health, EPA requires registrants of products used against public health pests to demonstrate that the product meets specific standards for effectiveness as well as for safety. The registered product that uses German cockroach pheromone as an active ingredient has met the applicable standards.

VII. Producer Information

Woodstream Corporation
Lititz, PA

VIII. Additional Contact Information

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