

# WHAT'S HAPPENING

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## Rain Reveals Fire Ant Mounds, Get Out and Scout!

**By Karen M. Vail**

Heavy rain can damage fire ant mounds, but it also provides the moisture needed for the ants to rebuild. With the recent heavy rains experienced across the state, fire ant mounds should be very visible which will make mound scouting a breeze. And the rain couldn't have come at a more opportune time. Baits are optimally retrieved by fire ants when temperatures are between 70 and 90 degrees F. So don't wait for complaints in mid-October when it might be too cold to bait. Do it now before it's too late.

When temperatures start to drop, fire ants will start moving towards heat sinks such as buildings, sidewalks, roads, fence posts, tree stumps, etc. When colonies are under objects, the best course of control is to use a bait because the workers will bring the bait back to the members of the colony. At cooler temperatures, baits are slower-acting and ant foraging activity is reduced and so is the bait's effectiveness. If an individual mound treatment of a drench or watered-in granular application is made during cooler temperatures when the colony is under an object, it is quite possible that the insecticide will miss the queen and/or brood that may be protected under these heat sinks.

Put fire ant management on the top of your priority list and control the ants now before they move under building or sidewalks and decide to forage into buildings. Around structures, we suggest the two-step method where an IGR (insect growth regulator) bait is broadcasted using a seeder devoted to fire ant baits. One week later or so, those mounds that are in high traffic areas are treated with individual mound treatments, including fast-acting baits. Or use a combination IGR/metabolic inhibitor bait to take advantage of both modes of action. See SP419 The Two Step Method: Managing Fire Ants Around Homes and in Neighborhoods (<http://utextension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/sp419.pdf>), the UT fire ant web site <http://fireants.utk.edu> or the eXtension web site at <http://www.extension.org/fire%20ants> for more information. A publication PB1788 was produced last year to address fire ant management around schools and can be found at <http://utextension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/PB1788.pdf>.

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## Will Occasional Invaders Make it into Your Home this Year?

**By Karen M. Vail**

Temperatures are starting to drop, crops are being harvested, cover for rodents is starting to disappear, and many nuisance pests are looking for a place to safely and warmly spend the winter. We recommend pest-proofing Tennessee structures by the third week in September. Although many of our pests tend to enter the second or third week in October, I'd prefer pest-proofing is done ahead of time just in case the weather changes abruptly and they are triggered to make an early move.

We've added a few new occasional invaders to Tennessee's list in the last few years. In addition to the usual suspects, such as multicolored Asian lady beetle; boxelder bugs; face, blue bottle and cluster flies; ground beetles; clover mites and mice, those folks living in east Tennessee have two new fall invaders. The [kudzu bug](#), *Megacopta cribraria*, new to the state this year, is now found in Polk, Bradley, Hamilton, Marion, McMinn, Rhea, Bledsoe, Sequatchie, Roane and Knox counties. The [brown marmorated stink](#), *Halyomorpha halys*, found in 2008 is spreading more slowly through the state and is now found in Knox, Blount, Loudon, Sevier, Hamblen, Grainger, Sullivan, Hamilton and Davidson counties. Both *M. cribraria* and *H. halys* are agricultural pests as well as home invaders.

Pest proofing involves applying a material to cracks or holes to keep pest insects and rodents out of structures or to prevent them from moving within structures. Holes or cracks greater than ¼ inch are recommended for sealing. Integrated pests management (IPM), a method of balancing and reducing risks associated with pests and pesticides, emphasizes pest proofing.

**For details on pest proofing structures, see these resources:**

Vail, K. 2009. Pest Proofing: Caulks, Sealants, Foams, Metal Products or Door Sweeps? UT E&PP Info #778 *Pests and Pesticides in Child-serving Facilities: An IPM Newsletter* 3(1): 2-5. [http://schoolipm.utk.edu/documents/newsletters/august\\_2009.pdf](http://schoolipm.utk.edu/documents/newsletters/august_2009.pdf)

Vantassel, S.M., S.E. Hygnstrom, D. M. Ferraro and R. R. Stowell. 2009. Rodent-Proof Construction — Structural. <http://www.ianrpubs.unl.edu/live/g1530/build/g1530.pdf>

**For details on managing some of these occasional invaders, see these resources:**

UGA Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health. 2012. Kudzu Bug. <http://www.kudzubug.org/index.html>

Vail, K. 2009. Will We Have a Lady Beetle Swarm This Year? Don't Know, Better Prepare! UT E&PP #60 *What's Happening* 25(21): 3-5. <http://eppserver.ag.utk.edu/Whats/wh2009/Issue-21-2009.pdf>

Vail, K., B. Long and D. Hensley. 2009. The Brown Marmorated Stink Bug Discovered in Knox Co., TN! UT E&PP #60 *What's Happening* 25(1): 1-2. <http://eppserver.ag.utk.edu/Whats/wh2009/Issue-1-2009.pdf>

Vail, K. 2011. Brown Marmorated Stink Bug Trap. UT E&PP #60 *What's Happening* 27(11): 3. <http://eppserver.ag.utk.edu/Whats/wh2011/Issue-11-2011.pdf>

Vail, K. F. Hale and W. Klingeman. 2002. SP341-H Boxelder Bugs and Red-Shouldered Bugs. UT Extension. <https://utextension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/SP341-H.pdf>

## Hay Movement and the Imported Fire Ant Quarantine

By Charles Brown, USDA-APHIS-PPQ

Drought conditions over many parts of the U.S. have resulted in a tremendous demand for hay by livestock producers and farmers in the drought-stricken areas. Hay from Gulf and Atlantic Coast States less affected by the drought are also areas that are within the USDA Imported Fire Ant (IFA) Quarantine. Baled hay and baled straw stored in direct contact with the ground are regulated articles in 7 CFR 301.81-2(c) of the IFA Quarantine.

For general information about the USDA Imported Fire Ant Quarantine: [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant\\_health/plant\\_pest\\_info/fireants/index.shtml](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/fireants/index.shtml)

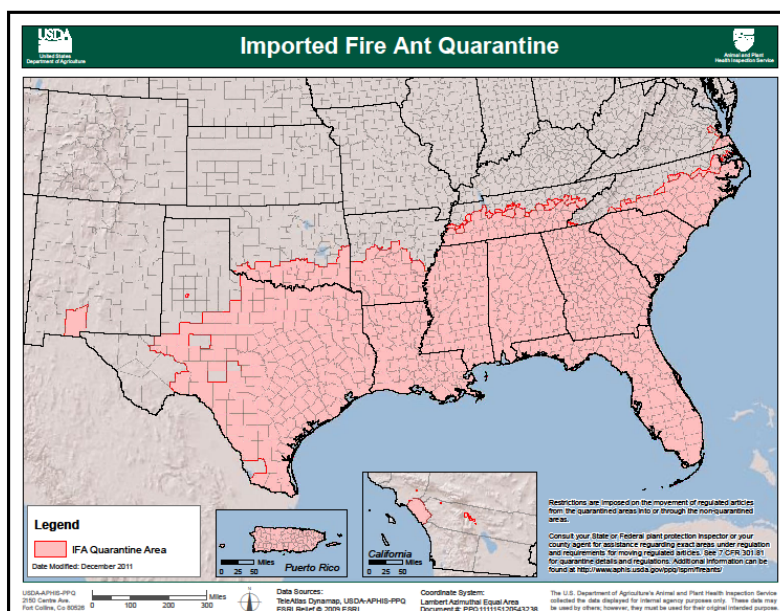
You can check to see if you are in or out of the quarantine by zip code at: [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant\\_health/plant\\_pest\\_info/fireants/zipcode.shtml](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/fireants/zipcode.shtml)

What does this mean for hay growers inside the quarantine who want to ship hay outside the quarantine?

- a. For baled hay that is stacked, all bales except the bottom layer that is in direct contact with the ground are not regulated and have no restrictions on movement. Hay that contains soil cannot leave the quarantine.
- b. Bales that are in direct contact with the ground can move inside the quarantine without restriction.
- c. Hay that is baled and shipped without storage is not regulated and has no restrictions on movement.
- d. Here are some management practices that can be followed to keep fire ants from hay:
  - i. Apply a fire ant bait (insecticide) around the outside of hay storage areas.
  - ii. Store hay on an impervious surface such as asphalt, concrete, or hard pan.
  - iii. Elevate hay in the field onto a pallet, a tire, or a landscape cloth so it is not in direct contact with the ground.
  - iv. If available, request an inspection by a state inspector to certify that the hay is free of fire ants.

What does this mean for those people outside of the quarantine who want to buy hay from inside the quarantine?

- a. When placing the order ask that the hay you buy not have fire ants, and visually inspect the hay bales when they are delivered to you. If possible, request that the hay be certified for movement by the State from which it is shipped.
- b. If you find any ants contact your State and local cooperative extension office.



## UT Fire Ant Website Gets a Facelift

**By Karen M. Vail**

This week we launched the new and improved fire ant site, <http://fireants.utk.edu/>. The site is more aesthetically pleasing and easier to use. We've added a news section and a page for Extension agents. Extension agents are often requested to provide presentations for commodity groups, the public and Master Gardeners. Resources (PowerPoints, videos, publications) are listed to help with presentations with links to the eXtension web site where agents can access frequently asked questions (and answers) about fire ants, pose a question to the ask-an-expert system, find fire ant related news articles, join the Fire Ant Community of Practice, visit the Fire Ant Museum of Control Methods and learn almost everything about fire ants.

## FTC Takes Action Against Companies Marketing Allegedly Unproven Natural Bed Bug and Head Lice Treatments

**By the Federal Trade Commission**

**Cedar, Cinnamon, Lemon Grass, Peppermint, and Clove Oil? There's No Proof They Will Eradicate Bed Bugs, Agency Says**

The Federal Trade Commission filed deceptive advertising charges against two marketers of remedies for bed bug infestations, who allegedly failed to back up overhyped claims that they could prevent and eliminate infestations using natural ingredients, such as cinnamon and cedar oil. One marketer also allegedly made misleading claims that its products were effective against head lice.

In one of the two cases, **RMB Group, LLC** and its principals have agreed to settle the charges relating to their "Rest Easy" bed bug products. In the case against Cedarcide Industries, Inc. and others, challenging their marketing of "Best Yet!" bed bug and head lice treatments, the defendants have not settled, and the FTC is beginning litigation against them.



Bed bugs have been a growing public health pest in recent years, according to the **Environmental Protection Agency**. Consumers plagued with bed bugs experience considerable stress, discomfort, and expense in attempting to rid themselves of these pests, and many are unaware of the complex measures needed to prevent and control them, according to the EPA.

Consumers concerned about bed bugs also should see the FTC publication, "**Good Night, Sleep Tight, and Don't Let the Bed Bugs Bite . . . Your Wallet,**" which urges caution about advertisements that offer quick solutions, and provides advice to consumers for treating bed bug infestations.

Also, as children head back to school this fall, the FTC urges parents to carefully research products that claim to treat head lice infestations.

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In both cases, the FTC charged the marketing companies – as well as the individuals behind them – with deceptive advertising for claiming that their products can stop and prevent bed bug infestations. The CedarCide defendants also are charged with making deceptive claims that their product can stop and prevent head lice infestations, and that the federal government endorses and is affiliated with their product.

The **CedarCide Industries, Inc. defendants market BEST Yet!**, a line of cedar-oil-based liquid products they claim will treat and prevent bed bug and head lice infestations. The defendants sell the product to consumers nationwide. They also sell it to hotels and other commercial establishments for treating bed bugs, and to school districts for treating head lice. Consumers can buy the product online, by phone, at the CedarCide website , and at Amazon.com. The cost of the products ranges from \$29.95 for the quart-sized spray bottle to \$3,394.95 for a hotel-motel bed bug eradication kit.

One radio advertisement for the product stated:

“In light of the recent bed bug media frenzy that has all of us nervous, you need to know that bed bug prevention and eradication relief are available. So let’s not all freak out. All you need is Best Yet from CedarCide.com. . . . Best Yet was developed at the request of the USDA for our military, as a solution for killing sand fleas. But guess what, it’s equally deadly to bed bugs, larvae and eggs.”

The FTC complaint charges that the CedarCide defendants make:

- unsupported claims that Best Yet! is effective at stopping and preventing bed bug infestations and that it is more effective than synthetic pesticides at doing so;
- false claims that scientific studies prove Best Yet! is effective at stopping and preventing bed bug infestations, and that it is more effective than synthetic pesticides at doing so;
- a false claim that the Environmental Protection Agency has warned consumers to avoid all synthetic pesticides for treating bed bug infestations;
- unsupported claims that Best Yet! is effective in stopping and preventing head lice infestations, killing head lice eggs, dissolving the glue that binds head lice eggs (known as nits) to hair, and killing head lice and their eggs in a single treatment; and
- false claims that scientific studies prove Best Yet! is effective in stopping and preventing head lice infestations.
- false claims that Best Yet! was invented for the U.S. Army at the request of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and that the USDA has acknowledged the product as the number one choice of bio-based pesticides.



The CedarCide complaint names Dave Glassel and several companies he controls: Springtech 77376, LLC; CedarCide Industries, Inc.; Chemical Free Solutions, LLC; and Cedar Oil Technologies Corp.



## Continued from page 5

**RMB Group, LLC marketed Rest Easy**, a liquid solution containing cinnamon, lemongrass, peppermint, and clove oils. The company sold it to retail chains Bed Bath & Beyond, Walgreens, and Big Lots, which in turn sold it to consumers primarily for use when staying in hotel rooms. The product was sold in a 16-ounce spray bottle, which cost \$6.99 to \$9.99, and a 2-ounce twin pack, which retailed for \$5.99 to \$7.77. It also was sold in a gallon jug for approximately \$50.

A video ad appearing on a company-sponsored website stated:

“Did you Know ... Bed bugs can survive up to 10 months without feeding. They can lay between 5 and 12 eggs per day ... per bug! Why take a chance on being their next meal when you travel? Or having your business shut down because somebody unwittingly brought them in? Rest Easy ... is a real GREEN All-Natural, Non-Pesticide, designed as a preventative for just these potential problems. Rest Easy And rest assured, bed bugs no more!”

The FTC complaint charges that the RMB Group defendants make unsupported claims that Rest Easy kills and repels bed bugs, and that a consumer can create a barrier against them by spraying the product around a bed.

Under the settlement, the defendants are barred from:

- representing that Rest Easy or any other pesticide kills or repels bed bugs or creates a barrier against them, and
- making any claims about the performance of such a product, unless the representations are true and backed by competent and reliable scientific evidence.

The settlement imposes a \$264,976 judgment against the Stuart, Florida-based RMB Group, LLC, and its owners, Howard and Bruce Brenner. The judgment is suspended because of the defendants' inability to pay.

The Commission vote authorizing the staff to file the complaint against the RMB Group LLC defendants and approving the proposed consent decree was 4-1, with Commissioner J. Thomas Rosch voting no. The Commission vote authorizing the staff to file the complaint against the Cedarciide defendants was 5-0. The FTC filed both complaints and the proposed settlement order for the RMB defendants in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California on September 5, 2012. The proposed settlement order is subject to court approval.

**NOTE:** The Commission files a complaint when it has “reason to believe” that the law has been or is being violated and it appears to the Commission that a proceeding is in the public interest. The complaint is not a finding or ruling that the defendant has actually violated the law. The stipulated order is for settlement purposes only and does not constitute an admission by the defendant that the law has been violated. Stipulated orders have the force of law when approved and signed by the District Court judge. The Federal Trade Commission works for consumers to prevent fraudulent, deceptive, and unfair business practices and to provide information to help spot, stop, and avoid them. To file a complaint in English or Spanish, visit the FTC's online **Complaint Assistant** or call 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357). The FTC enters complaints into Consumer Sentinel, a secure, online database available to more than 2,000 civil and criminal law enforcement agencies in the U.S. and abroad. The FTC's website provides **free information on a variety of consumer topics**. Like the FTC on **Facebook**, follow us on **Twitter**, and **subscribe to press releases** for the latest FTC news and resources.

Contact: Kerry O'Brien and Linda K. Badger, 415 848-5100

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**OTHER UT NEWSLETTERS WITH PEST MANAGEMENT INFORMATION**

**Fruit Pest News**

<http://web.utk.edu/~extepp/fpn/fpn.htm>

**Tennessee Crop and Pest Management Newsletter**

[http://www.utextension.utk.edu/fieldCrops/cotton/cotton\\_insects/ipmnewsletters.htm](http://www.utextension.utk.edu/fieldCrops/cotton/cotton_insects/ipmnewsletters.htm)

**Ornamental Pest and Disease Update**

<http://soilplantandpest.utk.edu/publications/ornamentalnwsltr.html>

**School IPM Newsletter**

<http://schoolipm.utk.edu>

**Tennessee Soybean Rust Hotline - 877-875-2326**

**USDA Soybean Rust Web Site**

<http://www.sbrusa.net>

**This and other "What's Happening" issues can be found at**

<http://eppserver.ag.utk.edu/Whats/whatshap.htm>

**Entomology and Plant Pathology Web Site**

<http://eppserver.ag.utk.edu>

**Precautionary Statement**

To protect people and the environment, pesticides should be used safely. This is everyone's responsibility, especially the user. Read and follow label directions carefully before you buy, mix, apply, store or dispose of a pesticide. According to laws regulating pesticides, they must be used only as directed by the label.

**Disclaimer**

This publication contains pesticide recommendations that are subject to change at any time. The recommendations in this publication are provided only as a guide. It is always the pesticide applicator's responsibility, by law, to read and follow all current label directions for the specific pesticide being used. The label always takes precedence over the recommendations found in this publication.

Use of trade or brand names in this publication is for clarity and information; it does not imply approval of the product to the exclusion of others that may be of similar, suitable composition, nor does it guarantee or warrant the standard of the product. The author(s), the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture and University of Tennessee Extension assume no liability resulting from the use of these recommendations.

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