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The efficacy of VespeX® wasp bait to control *Vespula* species (Hymenoptera: Vespidae) in New Zealand

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ABSTRACT

Transitioning from trials to pest control tool, the efficacy of controlling wasps *Vespula vulgaris* and *V. germanica* using VespeX® wasp bait was tested in 2015. VespeX® is a protein-based bait matrix with 0.1% fipronil. Five sites ranging <300 to >2000 ha and over 5500 ha in total had bait stations placed 300 × 50 m apart and received one application of VespeX®. Wasp nest traffic rates declined 93% in four days at one site, and over 97% after 20–38 days at all other sites. Measured honeydew availability also improved post wasp control. Further demonstrating feasibility, five different agencies worked closely with government leading many programme aspects. VespeX® was made more widely available in New Zealand towards the end of 2015. Web page information showed ~30% of all territorial authorities nationally are engaging in pest

wasp problems. This signals a future potential in the way that pest wasps might be managed in a community context for social, economic and biodiversity conservation objectives.

KEYWORDS:

Vespa germanica

V. vulgaris

pest wasp

wide-scale control

Vespex®

fipronil

protein bait

honeydew

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Disclosure statement

The second author is a director of the company manufacturing Vespex® wasp bait.

Additional information

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