

Developing Snail Management in Citrus Groves

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Summary: *Bulimulus bonariensis* (sporadicus), a land-dwelling snail, has been impacting several industries throughout central and north Florida including citrus. Damage from this pest largely comes from clogging irrigation jets, thereby reducing the amount of water getting to roots and consuming young tree foliage in individual protective covers (IPC). Snails and slugs are challenging to control through topical pesticides. To date, the most effective controls for this group of pests come in the form of baits. Baits with metaldehyde, sodium

ferric EDTA, and iron phosphate killed over 90% of snails in laboratory trials, however baits are expensive and are inconsistent in term of management efficacy in groves as mortality is linked to snails encountering and consuming baits. Growers have reported the potential role of pesticides already in use in citrus towards reducing snail populations. We are currently evaluating products already in use in citrus groves to determine which pesticide(s) may provide management options for *B. bonariensis*.

Additionally, our team is studying the seasonal activity of the snails. This information will allow us to make recommendations on optimal timing for management actions. This research is ongoing.

Take Home Message:

- *Bulimulus bonariensis* is an emerging pest in citrus.
- Baits are currently the main tool for snail management.
- Pesticides already used in groves could provide additional benefits towards snail management.

Funding:

