



Get a Leg Up: Staying Ahead of the Merciless Thrips

April 2015

Taking the initiative to keep thrips populations below damaging thresholds is always easier said than done. Make no mistake: Allowing thrips to get ahead of you is costly in terms of lost crop quality and the added expense of a “come from behind” control program. Shrink is very expensive!

Therefore, before you detect your first scarred bloom, deformed leaf or virus outbreak, take a step back and draw on your experiences with thrips control. You should be asking yourself these questions:

1. On which crops do they show up first every year?
2. Did I segregate incoming plant shipments to evaluate them for insect and disease presence?
3. What do the early stages of thrips look like and am I scouting weekly?
4. What are my weekly sticky-card counts telling me about the population trends?
5. Do I understand the thrips life cycle well enough to make timely pesticide decisions?
6. Am I using every tool, including cultural and nutritional monitoring, to reduce thrips reproduction?

Thrips have a well-deserved reputation for developing resistance, which makes a sound rotation strategy important.

It's not too late to gain the upper hand on thrips! Fortunately, some spray and drench products are demonstrating good activity. The example of Conserve® serves to remind us not to become overly reliant on one insecticide, no matter how many good qualities it has. Resistance-management labeling and good pesticide stewardship dictate that we cannot simply hammer away with pesticides as our “silver bullet.” Thrips have a well-deserved reputation for developing resistance to pesticides. Practicing a sound rotation strategy is an important part of slowing the progression of pesticide resistance.

GGSPRO works closely with many growers regarding pest control programs. The resulting feedback provides valuable insight into which products are working well and how best to utilize them. The following products and application strategies are currently among the most successful for thrips control:

First-Choice Products

• **Avid®** Tank-mixed with a neem-based insect growth regulator (IGR), such as **Azatin® O**, **AzaGuard®** or **Molt-X®**, and applied as a foliar application is effective when applied two times, seven days apart. To successfully break the



Thrips feeding damage on gerbera.

lifecycle, do not wait longer than seven days to make the second application. Four-hour and 12-hour REI.

• **Kontos®** Drench applications show very good results, though they're slow to take full effect (up to three weeks). Provides up to four weeks or more of control. GGSPRO has developed a drenching calculator to accurately determining stock-solution recipes and drench volumes. Foliar spray applications have given variable results and are not recommended for thrips control. Geraniums, cordyline, dracaena palm, fern, hoyo and phlox are among crops damaged by Kontos. Zero-hour REI.

• **Mesuroi 75 WP®** Recommended early in the crop as it may leave a residue and damage certain open blooms. Maximum application is two times at 10 days apart. Twenty four-hour REI.

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• **Overture® 35 WSP** A slower-acting insecticide, taking up to seven days to see significant reductions in adult thrips populations from a foliar application. Excellent plant and bloom safety. Growers often use this product after faster-acting options have reduced the population. Greenhouse use only. Twelve-hour REI.

• **Pylon® & Pylon TR** Foliar applications are typically made two times, seven days apart before rotating. Certain fruiting vegetables are on the label. One can of total-release aerosol

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treats 3,000 sq ft. Both formulations are for greenhouse use only. Both 12-hour REI.

**Second-Tier Products
(Used in Rotation with Primary Control Products)**

- **BotaniGard®** Tank-mixed as a foliar spray with a neem-based IGR, such as Azatin O, AzaGuard or Molt-X. Apply three times at three-to-four days apart, including the neem-based IGR in first and third treatments. Four-hour REI.
- Certain neonicotinoid insecticides, such as Flagship®, Safari® and TriStar®, have shown effectiveness against thrips. This mode of action is already heavily used for a variety of other greenhouse pests, so GGSPro typically doesn't recommend these products for thrips due to overuse concerns.

Newer, Promising Products

- **Mainspring™** can be used as a foliar spray or a drench. Foliar sprays stop feeding quickly but may take several days for death to occur. Drench applications may require up to two weeks for full effect and are unlikely to control thrips in flowers. Four-hour REI; zero-hour as a drench if label conditions are met.
- **XXpire™** Foliar applications, label requires a reapplication interval of at least 14 days. Up to two weeks of residual control. Shares MOA with Conserve. Twelve-hour REI.

Featured Products

Product	Size	Item No.
Avid 0.15 EC	1 qt.	70-1185
AzaGuard EC	1 qt.	70-1224
Azatin O	1 qt.	70-12301
BotaniGard ES	1 qt.	70-12501
Kontos SC	8.45 fl. oz.	70-1960
Mainspring	1 pt.	70-2330
Mesurool 75 WP	2 lbs.	70-2325
Molt-X	1 qt.	70-2405
Overture 35 WSP	1 lb.	70-2590
Pylon	1 pt.	70-2675
Pylon TR	12 - 2 oz. cans	70-2660
XXpire WG	1 lb.	70-9700