



Indiana ARBORIST ASSOCIATION, INC.

Lindsey Purcell, Executive Director

Fall 2012

Fall 2012 is better for EAB Planning than Treating

In Indiana and much of the Midwest, the summer of 2012 was definitely one for the record books. March and July were the warmest on record. Rainfall was spotty, with most of the state classified as under extreme drought for most of the summer. This took its toll on trees. Leaves flushed earlier than ever this spring, and thanks to the drought, leaves of many species were starting to senesce in early August.

While I have yet to see ash trees with yellowed leaves as of Aug 30, I have seen how the drought promoted canopy thinning in infested ash trees. Putting it bluntly, like gasoline on a fire, the drought has accelerated the decline of infested trees, as well as concerns among arborists and their customers. Well intentioned arborists are inclined to treat trees this fall with either soil treatments of imidacloprid, or tree injections of emamectin benzoate (Treeäge).

While fall applications may make everyone feel better, it is not the best course of action for the trees this year. I make this recommendation after reviewing data from a six year study conducted in Toledo, Ohio by my generous colleague Dan Herms, of The Ohio State University. He found that a fall application takes twice as much imidacloprid to provide the same level of protection for trees as a spring application. This is because the product, when applied to the soil in the fall, just sits there in a puddle under the tree during the winter until the tree leafs out in the spring. It takes half the product to kill EAB in the spring because it has been stored in a container, and not in the soil.

This year for certain, the drought and likely early leaf senescence is going to make it very difficult to get Treeäge injections into the trees this fall. That said, if you can get the product into the trees, there is no doubt that you will kill adult beetles and larvae that hatch from eggs in 2013. The drought however makes uptake a very big "if". Furthermore, studies by Herms and others that demonstrate two years of efficacy are based on studies where applications were made in the spring, not the fall. So the capacity of the fall 2012 treatment to kill beetles in the spring of 2014 has not been tested directly. For this reason I recommend putting off injections until the spring of 2013. If for logistical reasons you need to apply in the fall of 2012, then you may consider doing so, but at a reduced price to compensate your customer for potentially reduced longevity of the treatments.

On September 11, 2012, at 11 AM EST I will be giving a webinar at EABUniversity entitled, "Fall is for EAB Planning". Please visit the EABUniversity page at www.emeraldashborer.info to participate in the live webinar or to view the recording at a later date.

-Cliff Sadof, Purdue University