

BLAST COSTS:

Orange grower Mark Hendrixson of Orange Cove, Calif., has reduced spray costs as much as 75% with the Lectroblast electrostatic spray rig, a top 10 new product at the Tulare World Ag Expo.



Critics' choice

By LEN WILCOX

ONE of the top new products — according to a judging panel of farmers and agribusiness professionals — at February's World Ag Expo in Tulare, Calif., was the Lectroblast electrostatic spray rig manufactured by Progressive Ag Inc. of Modesto.

Electrostatic spraying isn't new, but the manufacturer created a new sensing system to dramatically cut chemical use and drift when treating young trees. The sensor turns the spray off when there's no tree to spray and turns it back on when the tree is within range.

The electrostatically charged droplets are attracted to the plant surface. This provides superior canopy penetration over conventional sprayers and increased chemical coverage. Since the droplets have the same charge, they react like magnets of the same charge and repel one another, keeping the spray pattern consistent. They remain in this

state until they contact earth-grounded plant leaves.

Speedy sprayer

Electrostatic sprayers use high-velocity air to discharge smaller droplets to the plant. Conventional sprayers use low-velocity air and high-pressure spray.

Due to the high-velocity air and charged spray cloud, electrostatic sprayers may produce superior canopy penetrations while traveling at higher speeds than conventional rigs.

More is at www.proaginc.com.
Wilcox is a Sanger, Calif., writer.

Key Points

- Sprayer was judged a "top new product" at World Ag Expo.
- Sensors shut off nozzles when plants or trees aren't detected.
- Electrostatic sprayer cuts chemical use for treating trees and vines.

Surviving times of making it work



**I.T. Hurtz
M.D.**

DURING these difficult financial times, we may find that we need to cut back on different things in our lives. But we mustn't cut back on safety. If breached, it can be devastatingly costly!

My 93-year-old father lived through the 1930s. His philosophy on life is to "make it work." He often refers to living then and living in today's financially stressed period as "making-it-work times." That means making do with what you have.

Looking closer at his survival formula, we can assume that to get through the current recession, we need to do more with less.

Doesn't work with safety

Lowering safety standards on the farm when you're working longer and harder is simply raising the risk of injury. The costs — such as medical expenses, lost work time and quality of life — of a serious injury to you, a worker or family member will far outweigh the time it takes to replace a safety shield, take a break or not step over that power takeoff shaft.

As you move into the growing season:



■ Plan ahead to avoid exhaustion-related mistakes.

■ Make sure equipment is in good condition before the season starts.

■ Focus on your task at hand, not that growing to-do list.

■ Repair or replace all missing shields and guards now.

■ Keep safe work practices a top priority.

"Making it work" during these times may well mean making do or cutting back in some aspects of our lives. But never let it compromise safety on your farm. It's an unaffordable risk.

I.T. Hurtz is brought to you by Cornell University's farm safety program.

Advertiser Supplied Information

Nitrogen Miser

Control nitrogen losses for pennies per pound

By Harold Brecht



H. Brecht

If growers routinely lost 30 cents of every dollar they deposited, they would be pretty upset with their bank. They should demand the same high standards with the nitrogen they apply this spring.

On average, 30 percent of the nitrogen in surface-applied urea can be lost into the air due to volatilization before plants are able to access it. Following record-high nitrogen prices in 2008, and with an uncertain price outlook for 2009, that's money that growers just can't afford to waste.

The most efficient way to prevent these costly losses is with the use of stabilized nitrogen technology. AGROTAIN International offers several cost-effective products that will greatly reduce nitrogen loss, all for just pennies per pound: AGROTAIN controls urea losses from volatilization. AGROTAIN

PLUS extends the availability of nitrogen in the ammonium form and reduces volatilization, denitrification and leaching losses in urea fertilizer and UAN applications.

Demand for stabilized nitrogen technology has never been greater, which is why we at AGROTAIN are encouraging everyone to contact their dealer now to book the AGROTAIN technology that fits their operation.

You work hard to make a crop, and the inputs you purchase should do no less. Upgrade to the proven performance of AGROTAIN this season and watch your nitrogen — as well as your money — work harder for you.

If you have a question for The Nitrogen Miser or for more information about stabilized nitrogen technology, contact me at hbrecht@agrotain.com or call 570-356-2910 or 888-425-8732.

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