

Eco-friendly snail bait now available

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Snails are a major problem in many grapevine production areas of SA, causing damage from early spring to mid-summer. Current management practices that use chemical pesticides are known to harm the environment. Vineyards provide a great opportunity to incorporate eco-friendly snail control strategies as part of integrated pest management programmes.

Guidelines for sustainable snail control

It is important to monitor snail activity throughout the year, and to target snails in autumn when conditions are favourable for snails to start feeding and mating. Weeds in the vine rows and work rows should be effectively controlled. It is best to put snail bait out before weeds and/or crop cover is treated with herbicides. Amidst high numbers of snails, treat with a follow-up application and continue snail management even if numbers are low.

The use of eco-friendly snail bait pellets in combination with the above guidelines is strongly recommended. The extensive use of Metaldehyde and Carbaryl products endangers non-target groups, including humans and animals. Despite the low-level application level,

Metaldehyde can bioaccumulate over time and Carbaryl can be toxic to earthworms and other beneficial soil-dwelling organisms. The export potential of the produce is also at risk due to the maximum residue level (MRL) carried by these chemical pesticides.

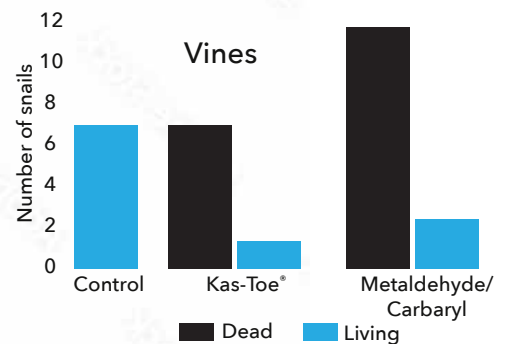
Introducing Kas-Toe® snail bait pellets

To create a safer way to control snails and slugs, Nutrico expertly formulated Kas-Toe® bait pellets (L11279, Act 36 of 1947), encompassing complexed iron and other proprietary ingredients to attract and lure all snails and slugs. The patented, user-friendly pellet format contains 18 g/kg of iron to manage pests without any toxicity to non-target organisms.

The active ingredient interferes with the calcium metabolism in the gut of slugs and snails, causing them to stop eating and die within three to six days. After ingestion of the bait formulation, slugs/snails tend to crawl away and die in their hiding place. Since the active ingredient is naturally occurring in South African soils, no MRL is required.

Efficacy trial results

To show the efficacy and safety of Kas-Toe® in vineyards, a series of field trials were carried out in different bioclimatic regions. The bait is applied at 20 kg/ha over the ground surface where the pests are active. Snail movement was restricted within the trial plots. Visual inspection of the average percentage crop cover and/or damage was determined at seven days after application as an indication of product effectiveness and compared to a control and industry standard. The crop damage was evaluated on a scale of 0 – 10, where 0 indicates no damage by snail activities and 10 indicates clear, far-reaching damage. Very few living snails were observed on the ground during the evaluation and almost no crop damage was reported in comparison to the negative control plots. This clearly indicates the reliable efficacy of Kas-Toe® to manage snails in vineyards.



For more information on the effective and sustainable control of snails and slugs using Kas-Toe®, contact Nutrico at +27 (0)11 392 4072, +27 (0)21 807 5920 or info@nutrico.co.za or visit www.nutrico.co.za.