



## **Determining Insect Pest Control Strategies Used by Comanche County Dairy Producers**

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**Objective:** To determine what methods are currently being implemented by dairy producers to suppress insect pests.

**Materials and Methods:** A survey was developed and distributed to 20 dairy producers present at a CEU training session held in Comanche, Texas. Questions on the survey focused on three areas, 1) what insects are considered pests, 2) determining the methods used suppress the insect pests, and 3) which insecticides were being used.

### **Results**

Here is the ranking of insect pests according to those that participated in the survey, 1) house fly, 2) horn fly, 3) face fly, 4) cattle grub, 5) stable fly, 6) lice, 7) horse fly, and 8) scabies or mites.

Here is the ranking of methods used to apply insecticides for suppressing insect pests, 1) pour-on (33.3%), 2) spray (28.9%), 3) back rubbers (20.1%), 4) injectables (14.5%), 5) ear tags (13.1%), 6) dusts (1.4%), 7) feed-through (0%), and bolus (0%).

Two of 16 dairies (14.2%) purchase parasitoid wasps for suppressing house flies on dairies.

### **Discussion**

As expected the house fly and horn fly are viewed as the top insect pests associated with dairies. Accordingly, the methods used for insect suppression are those that primarily focus on killing adult house flies (i.e. spray and pour-ons). However, very little effort is used to kill the larval stage of the house fly (i.e. 0% for feed-throughs). Information from this survey indicates that more efforts are needed to educate producers on the variety of methods used for suppressing insect pests. Additionally, efforts are needed to educate producers on the identification of insect pests present on their dairies. Misdiagnosis of an insect pest will lead to monetary losses from improper methods for suppressing them being applied.