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Controlling

House Ants

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Controlling House Ants

by

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There are a number of small red or black ants that frequently gain access to the house and cause no little annoyance to the careful housewife by their invasion into the pantry and kitchen. Recent investigations have disclosed one or two practices which will give almost immediate results and will clear out even the most serious infestations.

Carbon Bisulphide

Where it is possible to locate the colony from which the ants are coming outside the house, get a small amount of carbon bisulphide from your insecticide dealer and pour about 2 tablespoons of this liquid directly into the entrance to the colony. The earth should then be pressed firmly over the entrance to hold the fumes inside. This material is a liquid which transforms to a gas on exposure to air, but is heavier than air and, therefore, permeates downward through the passages of the colony and kills all of the ants that are present. Carbon bisulphide is inflammable and you should keep fire away during its use. Do not open the container near a hot stove and do not smoke while using it.

Chlordane

Chlordane is one of the recently developed chlorinated insecticides. This material acts both as a contact poison and as a fumigant. Chlordane has been found superior to the slower acting stomach poisons such as tartar emetic and sodium fluoride. If the colony can be located, the ant hills may be drenched with a solution of chlordane, using 8 teaspoons of the 50 per cent wettable powder for each 1 gallon of water. The crater of each mound should be filled to overflowing, so that a sufficient amount will soak into the mound. The hills may also be ringed with a 5 per cent chlordane dust. Place the chlordane about a foot from the mound to make certain all ant passages are enclosed. Although instant results may not be observed, ants that walk through this material will die soon.

DDT

Kitchens and pantries can be protected for considerable lengths of time from ants by the use of DDT sprays. These sprays are known as residual sprays because a deposit of DDT remains toxic for long periods. Sprays containing 5 per cent DDT may be used. The spray should be directed so that a deposit is placed on the walls, cupboard doors, and under the various kitchen appliances. Particular attention should be paid to the baseboards and corners of the room. No DDT should be allowed to contaminate foodstuffs or eating utensils.

Note: Continuing research allows new control recommendations as new and better measures are developed. This circular is revised from and is to supersede Station Circulars of Information 245 and 388, now out of print.

Tartar Emetic

Where it is not possible to locate the colony outside of the house, tartar emetic at the rate of 3 grains to about 4 tablespoonfuls of cheap syrup may be used. Mix this material thoroughly and smear on bits of wood or china and place about on shelves and the runways the ants frequent. It is very easy to get this material too strong, therefore it is advisable to have the druggist weigh up the material in 3-grain samples rather than larger amounts. Tartar emetic is a slow-acting poison which will not kill the ants instantly, but permits them to collect the material, carry it to their colony and feed their brood upon it and thus the entire colony is killed out in a few days. Since this material is only slightly poisonous it is not dangerous to use in this amount about the shelves and food supplies. For ants that prefer grease and meats to sweets, mix small quantities of tartar emetic into grease or pieces of bacon rind.

Sodium Fluoride

Sodium fluoride is a crystalline-like powder which is a great repellent for ants. Many people report excellent results following dusting or shaking this material about shelves and places frequented by the ants. Place the material in a salt shaker or similar receptacle and dust it here and there. This is likewise good for controlling cockroaches and other similar pests that occasionally annoy the housewife. Care should be exercised in the use of sodium fluoride as it is poisonous to humans if taken internally.