

## Highlights and Impacts of FY '05 Projects Funded by the Texas Imported Fire Ant Research and Management Project

**Project Investigator's Name: Awinash P. Bhatkar**

**Project Title: Imported Fire Ant Survey, Quarantine and Regulatory Activities of the Texas Department of Agriculture**

Significant Accomplishment	Impact on Imported Fire Ant Management
<p><b>Survey Activities:</b> <i>Detection surveys</i> were assigned to the cooperators at Texas Tech University (TTU) and UT for conducting the surveys in El Paso, Brewster, Culberson, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis, Presidio, Terrell, Crockett, Sutton, Schleicher, Menard, Concho, Coleman, Callahan, Jim Hogg, Starr, Zapata, Winkler, Ward, Crane, Upton, Reagan, Glasscock, Irion, Sterling, Coke, Lubbock, Hockley, Lamb, Hale, Floyd, Crosby, Garza, Lynn, Terry, Shackelford, Throckmorton, Baylor, Archer, Clay, Howard, Martin, Andrews, Nolan, Fisher, Stonewall, Haskell, Wilbarger, Mitchell, Scurry, Knox, Foard and Hardeman and Runnels counties. UT decided not to participate in the surveys project. TTU accepted to survey all the counties.</p> <p><i>Delimitation Surveys:</i> TDA inspectors interacted with the cooperators to for delimitation surveys in Baylor, Callahan, Coke, Coleman, Concho, Crockett, Fisher, Foard, Hardeman, Haskell, Howard, Irion, Kent, Knox, Lubbock, Martin, Mitchell, Nolan, Runnels, Scurry, Shackelford, Sterling, Stonewall, and Wilbarger counties where sporadic IFA infestations occurred in FY 2004 as a result of above normal rain in 2004. The infestations were isolated to the City of Lubbock. These infestations were possibly through the import of landscaping material from infested areas. A one-time spot treatment will be conducted of the newly infested sites.</p>	<p>As an integral part of the project on Fire Ant Management in Texas, the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) plays a central role in preventing the artificial spread of the red imported fire ant (IFA), <i>Solenopsis invicta</i> Buren into non-infested areas. Surveys and monitoring the spread are important to undertake regulatory and quarantine actions.</p>
<p><b>Public Information Outreach:</b> The updated IFA quarantine map was posted for access at the TDA's website: <a href="http://www.agr.state.tx.us/producer_info/regulatory/reg_fire_ant.htm">http://www.agr.state.tx.us/producer_info/regulatory/reg_fire_ant.htm</a>. In addition, questions from nurseries, growers, brokers and shippers are routinely answered by the regional and program staff on the certification and treatment of quarantine articles for shipment to IFA-free areas.</p>	<p>TDA continues to emphasize public education, in addition to regulatory measures to help control the spread of IFA.</p>
<p><b>Residue Sampling:</b> Seventy-five nurseries were monitored for the residue in soil media. The samples were sent for analysis to the TDA Pesticide Laboratory at College Station. The analysis indicated that 33 nurseries used USDA approved quarantine treatments, while 42 nurseries had residue below the detection limit. Twelve sediment samples from the water bodies surrounding the treatment nurseries were collected and sent to USDA-APHIS Environmental Monitoring Laboratory at Gulfport, Mississippi for residue analysis.</p>	<p>USDA approved quarantine treatments are used for phytosanitary certification of plant products exported to IFA-free areas. Residue analysis to assess the environmental impact of pesticides.</p>
<p><b>Road Station Inspections:</b> TDA conducts random road inspections throughout the state at weigh stations in cooperation with the Texas Department of Public Safety to detect and prevent the spread of quarantined pests, including IFA. A total of 6,717 vehicles passed through the road stations and 154.5 man-hours were spent to monitor plant commodities. There were no apparent violations of the IFA quarantines during this inspection period.</p>	<p>Monitoring IFA at the state and county borders reduce the spread of IFA. Road station inspections and destination inspections are conducted to reduce the spread through commerce.</p>

**Source and Amount of Funds Leveraging Current Fire Ant Project**

**1. State Funds: \$42,500.00**