CROP PROTECTION (1988) 7:131-136

Efficacy of *Bacillus thuringiensis* preparations containing dead and live spores against two avocado pests: the giant looper, *Boarmia selenaria* (Lep.: Geometridae) and the honeydew moth, *Cryptoblabes gnidiella* (Lep.: Phycitidae)

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ABSTRACT. The activity of Toarow CT, a commercial preparation containing dead spores of *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki*, was compared with that of two other commercial preparations containing live spores, against the giant looper, *Boarmia* (*Ascotis*) *selenaria* (Schiffermüller), and the honeydew moth, *Cryptoblabes gnidiella* (Millière). In laboratory experiments Toarow CT was compared with Dipel W.P. and in field trials with Thuricide HP. In laboratory trials 60–80% of *B. selenaria* larvae aged 8 and 15 days were killed by a product concentration of 0·5% and 80–90% by a concentration of 1%, respectively, for Toarow CT and Dipel WP; 100% mortality of 15-day-old giant looper was reached only on the ninth day after initial treatment. In field trials, after 1 week some larvae remained in Toarow CT-treated plots, but after 2 weeks no live larvae were found after Toarow CT and Thuricide HP treatments. Because of the great sensitivity of *C. gnidiella* to *B. thuringiensis* preparations, the 6- to 8-day-old larvae were killed on avocado fruit and on artificial medium, between 24 h and 4 days after treatment, depending on their age and the concentration of preparations used.