

## **Formicidas and control techniques for leafcutter ants in vineyards, Serra Gaúcha region- RS**

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Leafcutter ants can cause serious damage to vineyards. In the Serra Gaúcha region, the main wine grape-producing center in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, leafcutter ants of the genus *Acromyrmex* (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) have been damaging the grape crop. This study surveyed the main formicides used by wine-grape growers to control leafcutter ants in the Serra Gaúcha, and identified the growers' difficulties in managing these insects. The survey used personal interviews with 83 growers in the cities of Bento Gonçalves (18), Caxias do Sul (13), Farroupilha (18), Flores da Cunha (11), Pinto Bandeira (17), Veranópolis (3), Nova Prata (1), and Vila Flores (2). All the winegrowers affirmed the necessity of controlling leafcutter ants, and reported using mainly toxic baits and insecticidal powders. The main formicide bait formulations used by the producers were Grão Verde® (sulfuramide; Indústria Química Dipil Ltda), Blitz® (fipronil; Basf S.A.) and Mirex® (sulfuramide; Atta Kill Ind. e Com. de Defensivos Agrícolas Ltda), used by 51%, 46% and 3% of the respondents, respectively. The main insecticide powders were K'otrine® (deltamethrin; Bayer S.A.), Orthene® (acephate; Arysta Lifescience do Brasil Indústria Química e Agropecuária S.A.) and Nitrosin® (deltamethrin), used by 77%, 9% and 6% of the growers, respectively; while 8% reported using other insecticides in powdered form. Inadequate management of toxic baits and powders, difficulty in locating nests, and lack of knowledge of the species that occur in the vineyards are among the main difficulties encountered in managing this group of insects in the region.

Palavras-chave: *Acromyrmex*; management; grape crop

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