

## COMPARING EMERALD ASH BORER TREATMENTS POINTER (IMIDACLOPRID) VS. TREE-AGE

As most of you already know, Tree Green's "weapon of choice" against the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) consists of a two-part treatment. The first part is a soil drench to the root system using two different products. The insecticide "Merit" contains the active ingredient "Imidacloprid." We also include a rich fertilizer mixture that keeps the tree at optimum health during EAB attack. Tree health is crucial during this trying time! The second part is a systemic trunk infusion with a product called "Pointer" which also has the active ingredient "Imidacloprid."

Some of our clients have asked about an alternate EAB treatment method called Tree-Age, which has been getting press lately. The company that manufactures Tree-Age, their suppliers who sell it, and the companies who offer it claim that Tree-Age is a superior product. It's definitely not in our opinion!

They refer to a scientific study in Michigan, which they say determined that Ash trees continued to decline despite being treated with Imidacloprid. Our clients who presently live in hard-hit EAB areas in Batavia, Geneva and St. Charles know this statement is certainly false! They just have to look out their windows towards their healthy, flourishing Ash trees in neighborhoods where all the surrounding Ash are dead. Imidacloprid has saved, and continues to save, tens of thousands of Ash in Michigan and Illinois!

It must be noted that Tree-Age is a newer product. Its history of saving Ash cannot hold a candle to Imidacloprid.

In an opinion by Dr. Mark Harrell of the Nebraska Forest Service, titled "Concerns About the Current Multistate Recommendations On Emerald Ash Borer Control," he states:

1. The study touted by the manufacturer of Tree-Age that said Imidacloprid was not as effective was based on a two-year test in which Imidacloprid was applied only in the second year after an **ineffective experimental product failed** in the first year, whereas competitive tested products were used both years. This is hardly a fair or accurate test! Dr. Harrell stated "delaying the application of Pointer (Imidacloprid) by just that one year allowed those trees to become more heavily infested with EAB before the Pointer treatment was even applied, and NO product is effective once the trees are heavily infested."
2. Dr. Harrell also referred to tests that do show Pointer (Imidacloprid) to be highly effective. Those tests show that Imidacloprid has kept Ash trees alive since 2002 (the year EAB was first discovered in this country) in a monitoring study in a heavily infested area in Plymouth, Michigan. It goes unsaid that if Imidacloprid can save Ash through a time when the insect pressure was at its peak, they will continue to survive now that the pressure is declining.
3. Imidacloprid was found to have reached the trees' leaves only 7 days after injection and was found still active in the outer xylem 90 days after injection, suggesting Imidacloprid controls both EAB adults feeding on foliage, as well as larvae tunneling under the bark.

4. Dr. Harrell said trunk injection treatments should be effective, safe for the applicator and others, and cause minimal injury to the tree. He goes on to report that damage caused by Pointer injections is low, but much higher damage levels were shown with the Tree-Age process where a series of actual holes are drilled into the tree with a power drill. He states "damage from trunk injections can seriously affect the health and long-term survival of injected trees, especially if the trees are mature, stressed or weakened, or as the damage increases after repeated injection treatments. The amount of damage caused by trunk injections is directly related to the size of the drilled hole and the volume of product injected." The hole size and volume of product is much more damaging to the tree trunk when injecting Tree-Age than when injecting Pointer considering we inject using a simple needle that gently slides through the bark.

We are not saying Tree-Age might not work. We are only saying it doesn't have the long-term track record of Imidacloprid. **There is one advantage to Tree-Age and two very major disadvantages in our opinion.** Tree-Age touts itself as a product that only needs to be applied every two years. While that may be a financial benefit, it does NOT outweigh the two negatives in our opinion, which are the excessive trunk damage the Tree-Age injection process itself causes and the toxicity of the product towards people, pets and wildlife. Tree-Age is a "Restricted Use" product, aka **highly toxic!** Tree Green could offer this product, as we are licensed to purchase restricted use pesticides. However, we chose not to put our employees, your family, pets, and/or local wildlife at risk.

**Pointer is much safer. It is NOT a restricted use product. Actually, the active ingredient Imidacloprid is the same product used in common flea and tick medications that are applied directly to our dogs' and cats' skin!** Does a more toxic product mean it will do a better job? Absolutely not! We consider it "over-kill." **Homeowners should always insist on getting the job done with the safest and most environmentally-conscious products available. Imidacloprid suits that purpose!**

We apologize for the length of this email, but we felt we needed to clear the air comparing our products of choice (Merit and Pointer) to Tree-Age.

Again, we are following the treatment recommendations of a Master Arborist who has saved more Ash trees than anyone in the world, including thousands in Michigan alone. He has stated that right now, as EAB pressure is still building in our area, yearly treatment is necessary! Meanwhile, he is still testing trees up North for the minimum required treatment program to keep your Ash healthy once EAB pressure subsides. We will report on exactly what the findings are (regarding future reduced treatment programs) as soon as those studies are completed.

As Always, Thank You For Allowing Us To Care For Your Valuable Landscaping!

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