

spongy moth

WISCONSIN COOPERATIVE
SPONGY MOTH PROGRAM

spray
operations

targeted pest

Spongy moth (*Lymantria dispar*), which can defoliate trees en masse as a caterpillar during outbreaks. It is also a nuisance, as the caterpillar hairs can cause skin rashes along with other allergic reactions.

program goals

To protect and preserve Wisconsin's trees and beyond by slowing the spread of spongy moth establishment in western Wisconsin.

treatments

Newly-hatched spongy moth caterpillars are targeted in the spring with Btk (*Bacillus thuringiensis var. kurstaki*), a biological pesticide. Adult male moths are targeted in the summer with a mating disruptor (MD), which mimics a female spongy moth's pheromone.

start dates

May to June: first round of applications (Btk);
Late June to July: second round of applications (MD).

daily spray schedule

Btk: can begin at sunrise, as weather conditions allow
MD: about 7 a.m., as weather conditions allow

Treatment continues as long as weather conditions remain acceptable and normally end by early afternoon for Btk and late afternoon for MD.

optimal weather

Low winds to reduce drift; high humidity levels to reduce evaporation; no precipitation.

planes used

Air Tractors, which are also used for treating corn and soybeans. Depending on the plane used, they can treat 500-1000 acres per hour.

Aerial application planes are fitted with global positioning systems (GPS) and a computer/satellite system for application precision.

1-800-642-MOTH (6684) | spongymoth.wi.gov

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