

Connovation Developing Rodent Repellent Possum Bait.

Rats eating baits applied to control possums is not uncommon but when this occurs obviously much greater costs are required to bring possums under control. Also, performance targets to lower possum numbers to pre-determined levels may unnecessarily be met because of rat predation on baits.

In 2007 Connovation produced a new cereal-based paste bait matrix No. 215 which is different from the standard No 213/ cereal-based paste matrix. 213 is the bait matrix to which cholecalciferol and diphacinone is added to make Feracol® and RatAbate® and it is also the basis for many of the delivery systems for Feratox® baits.

Anecdotal evidence from field work has shown that rats are not interested in feeding on the No. 215 for a number of days. One Contractor who had experienced major problems with rats eating baits before possums switched totally to No. 215 in late 2007. He was looking for a bait matrix that was palatable to possums but significantly less palatable to rats. Using the FeraFeed No. 215 suggests very strongly that this bait is not significantly attacked by rats for at least 5-7 days. He has now carried out possum control over 18,500 hectares with FeraFeed No. 215 and Feratox® and the results achieved using FeraFeed have been most satisfactory and all monitors have been passed.

We needed to establish the effectiveness of a possum bait containing a rodent deterrent by demonstrating possum bait consumption and little rodent consumption when pre-feeding with 215 baits. So preliminary cage trials to test 215vs213 were recently completed at Lincoln University and results look very favourable with minimal feeding by rodents on the No. 215 bait. This is confirmed by the cage trap trial results and summary of this work.

Field trials are now being started in an area on Banks Peninsula where possums and rodents are abundant to see if similar results are obtained. We will keep you informed on these trials as results are gained.

Results for cage trials to test 215vs213

Date: 31 October 2008

Protocol :

The difference of palatability between 213 and 215, has been tested on 20 Rats (10 Females & 10 Males).

The experience lasted 4 days and 3 nights.

A new portion of 215 and 213 was adjusted each day (60g).

Results :

Sex	No	Total bait diff (g)	% 213 eaten	% 215 eaten
male	1	109.81	98.22	1.78
male	2	101.04	99.24	0.76
male	3	81.49	97.84	2.16
male	4	91.26	97.97	2.03
male	5	91.29	99.17	0.83
male	6	93.49	98.11	1.89
male	7	102.98	99.49	0.51
male	8	126.01	104.36	-4.36
male	9	92.32	99.61	0.39
male	10	131.23	96.71	3.29
female	1	48.55	91.97	8.03
female	2	66.80	94.81	5.19
female	3	72.55	96.69	3.31
female	4	82.22	94.94	5.06
female	5	78.16	98.69	1.31
female	6	46.64	92.09	7.91
female	7	71.07	97.73	2.27
female	8	65.51	97.42	2.58
female	9	81.29	100.90	-0.90
female	10	79.34	95.25	4.75
Average			97.56	2.44

Remarks:

The palatability of the 215 bait seems to be really inferior than the 213. These results confirm the repellent property of 215 for rats.

Some results are negative due to a difficulty of washing the bait before the weigh-in.

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