



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Animal and  
Plant  
Health  
Inspection  
Service

# Wildlife Services Wisconsin FACT SHEET

## MANAGING STARLING CONFLICTS AT DAIRIES & FEEDLOTS IN WISCONSIN



European starlings often congregate in feedlots and dairies during winter in Wisconsin and cause damage by consuming and contaminating feed and potentially transmitting harmful diseases to livestock. USDA-Wildlife Services

has developed a program to reduce the damage caused by starlings at dairies and feedlots.

If requested, Wildlife Services can visit the producer's operation to make a number of recommendations that can be used by the producer to reduce damage caused by the starlings. In addition, Wildlife Services can use the toxicant DRC-1339 (which is registered for use in these situations) to expediently reduce the number of starlings on the farm. DRC-1339 acts by destroying kidney function. Starlings that consume it begin to show signs of lethargy in about 6 to 8 hours and die within 24 hours. By that time, virtually all of the toxicant in their body has been metabolized and excreted, effectively eliminating the possibility of secondary poisoning. Starlings are quite sensitive to DRC-1339 while mammals and hawks are generally resistant. Therefore, hazards to non-target animals are extremely low.

The process entails making an attractive bait available to the starlings for several days to establish a feeding pattern. This practice is called "pre-baiting" and generally takes 3 to 7 days. The pre-bait is placed in or near barns where the starlings are accustomed to feeding such as an alley between the feed bunks. After the starlings are consistently feeding on the pre-bait, a limited amount of bait that has been treated with DRC-1339 is placed in the same location where the untreated pre-bait had been placed. Wildlife Services will provide the producer with the necessary pre-bait, we will apply the DRC-1339 treated bait, we will be on-site to monitor the project and we will remove treated bait at the end of the day. Because there are several hours between

the time the toxicant is consumed and when the starlings die, it is very possible that many of the starlings will die off-site. We strongly recommend that the producer advise their neighbors that the dead starlings pose no hazard to people or pets because the toxicant has been metabolized and excreted prior to death of the starlings.

The key to a successful control project is to establish good pre-bait acceptance. To minimize project costs, it is the producer's responsibility to conduct this part of the project. Where satisfactory pre-bait acceptance has been established, reductions of 75% to 95% of the starlings have been achieved in most cases. Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee results.



If you have any questions regarding this program, please contact us at: Northern District Office: USDA-APHIS-WS, P.O. Box 1064, Rhinelander, WI 54501; phone: 1-800-228-1368, or Southern District Office: 1201 Storbeck Dr., Waupun, WI 53963; phone: 920-324-4514.