

Kunafin Insectary Plays Role in Fly Control

by Bob Strong

It would be nice if a 100 percent conversion could be realized when feeding cattle. It would definitely solve some problems. But we all know it doesn't work out quite that way. You end up with a lot of manure. Most of it finds its way for use as fertilizer. But if manure removal efficiency doesn't reach 100 percent, it can turn into a host product for parasites.

Biting flies cause stress and the loss to cattle feeders is significant. Spreading and removing manure and composting are only part of the solution. According to Frank Junfin of Kunafin Insectary, the middle of the pens are not only the area where there is an accumulation of manure. It can collect along fence lines, around water tanks and feed bunks. Then there's the dampness of decaying, spilled feed and silage that can also be insect breeding ar-

tech but he says, "It's not just one thing that will solve the problem." He recommends an assessment of the operation, a manure management program, educated use of limited pesticides, and releasing fly parasites using a Kunafin entomologist, and monitoring.

According to Junfin, the solution to fly problems is like any other problem. First you have to define the problem, and every situation is different. "It requires an investigation of the location and a biological integrated fly management program." That sounds pretty high

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The company, which produces and supplies beneficial insects, sets up an extensive monitoring schedule for each operation.



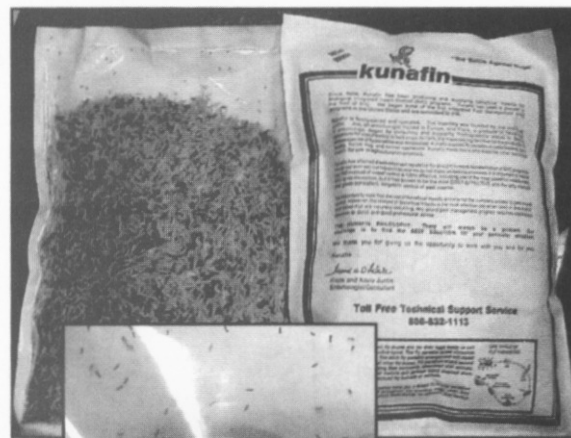
Covering several acres in south Texas, the Kunafin Insectary is one of the largest in the world. It supplies bugs to over a dozen countries.

Horn flies and face flies are the two main species that effect cattle in pastures. In feedlots, stable and house flies are the main pests. House flies are manly a nuisance but stable flies feed on blood and attack the animal's legs and ankles with painful bites. There are a wide variety of control methods available such as: chemicals, sprays, pour-on's, back rubbers, dust bags, feed additives, ear tags, fly traps, and mechanical control. Each method has its niche in the process of fly control, but several will probably have to be employed for the best fly control depending on the particular situation.

When I toured the Kunafin Insectary I was surprised at how large the insectary is. It is as large or larger than most manufacturing plants. It is located in Quemado, Texas, and employes over 35 people. The family business was started in 1959 by Frank's late father, Joe Junfin, who was consulting and applying bene-

ficial insects to field crops in south Texas. In the mid 70s, when Frank graduated from Texas A&M with a degree in Entomology, they started the insectary, supplying parasitic wasps for fly control in feedlots and dairies, and Green Lacewings and Trichogramma for crops, orchards, and gardens.

"The beauty of it is that nature created this natural product that kills flies. There's no resistance," said Adele Junfin, who co-owns the company with her husband Frank. When adult female flies lay eggs in manure, the maggots that hatch within 24 hours use the decomposing manure as a food source. Female wasps supplied by the Kunafin Insectary pierce the maggot cocoon and lay eggs in the maggots. After the baby wasps hatch, they eat the maggots.



The bugs are packaged and shipped by UPS, FedEx, DHL and US Post.

Kunafin has supplied wasps to thousands of operations, ranging from small horse farms to feedlots with thousands head of cattle. For more information call Frank or Adele Junfin at 1-800-832-1113. ♦