

8-1946

EC1538 Prairie Dog Control

O. S. Bare

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/extensionhist>

Bare, O. S., "EC1538 Prairie Dog Control" (1946). *Historical Materials from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension*. 2662.
<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/extensionhist/2662>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Extension at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Historical Materials from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

Sept.
1946

5
85
E7
#1538
C.1

E. C.
1538

Prairie Dog Control



Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics
University of Nebraska College of Agriculture, and the United States
Department of Agriculture cooperating.

O. S. Bare, Extension Entomologist

Poison or Gas Them

Poison prairie dogs with a poisoned oats bait. The prepared bait is on sale in many counties and your county agent should be able to tell you if and where it is available. If mixed bait cannot be bought locally, you can prepare it yourself.

How to Prepare Bait

Mix together one ounce of powdered strychnine alkaloid, one ounce of baking soda and a level teaspoonful of saccharine. Dissolve a heaping tablespoonful of laundry starch in a little cold water and add three-fourths of a pint of hot water. Boil the starch, stirring constantly until it forms a clear paste. Then sift the poison mixture into the paste, stirring well until it becomes smooth and creamy. Stir in a half teacupful of corn syrup and a tablespoonful of glycerine. Pour the hot mixture over 16 quarts of good clean oats and stir until every kernel is coated. Spread out until it dries. It is then ready to use.

How to Use Bait

A quart of poisoned oats is enough to treat 30 or 40 burrows. Scatter it on clean hard ground near the mounds or entrances of occupied burrows, but do not put it on loose dusty soil nor in the hole. A tablespoonful is about right for each burrow. Scatter it so livestock will not pick it up. Remember—strychnine is a very dangerous poison.

When to Poison Prairie Dogs

If weather is fair, excellent kills are secured in March and early April. Very good kills are common in July, August, September and October. Warm bright periods in November also are good. When grass is fresh and green they do not take bait readily. Later or earlier they take it well.

Gas the Stragglers

Either calcium cyanide or carbon bisulfide is effective. They are quite expensive but are good for destroying wise old prairie dogs that won't eat baits. If calcium cyanide is used, an ounce of the powdered form (about a heaping tablespoonful) or an ounce and a half of the flake or granular form, is needed for each occupied burrow. Place it down in the hole by means of a long handled spoon, or blow it into the burrow with a good dust gun. Plug the hole tightly with soil. (Sod plug is best) Calcium cyanide when exposed to air forms a deadly gas that kills quickly. Work with it only in the open air and avoid inhaling fumes. It works best when the ground contains considerable moisture.

If carbon bisulfide is used, one liquid ounce (two tablespoonfuls) should be poured on some cheap absorptive material such as corn cobs, cotton waste, old rags, or dry horse manure which is then dropped into the burrow. Plug the hole. The gas sinks to the bottom and kills the prairie dogs. It works best after the ground has warmed up well. Carbon bisulfide is inflammable and the vapor is explosive. Keep it away from all forms of fire and avoid inhaling the fumes.