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*Root System Physiologist,
The Morton Arboretum,
Lisle, IL 60532*

ABSTRACT

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Increasingly the green industry is turning to integrated pest monitoring, application of short-residual or pest-specific products, and resistant plants. Horticultural oils are an important part of this trend. Horticultural oils were reformulated in the early 1980's, making summer applications more feasible. SunSpray Ultra-Fine Spray Oil is an effective pesticide with low leaf-burning potential. However, researchers must document its safety for nursery stock before many nurserymen will incorporate it in their summer pest-control programs. We developed an experimental procedure testing repeated applications of a 2 percent formulation of SunSpray 6E Plus for phytotoxicity on 52 taxa of nursery trees. In Maryland, many insect pests are active from May through August. Since these are the primary months of damaging insect activity, we chose these months to evaluate potential phytotoxic burn. Our conclusion is that 2 percent summer oil applications are safe for use on nursery stock to control insect and mite pests.