

## **Vicon Spreader Calibration Steps for Fire Ant Bait & Granular Chlorpyrifos**

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- 1- Accurately measure a 200' course and time several different gears and rpms to find one close to 50 seconds. Make good notes. See examples at end. The products will spread wider with higher rpm's. Wider is not always better depending on row width and number of rows per blocks.
- 2- Install the broadcast spout.
- 3- Put about 3 gallons of bait (half bag of granular Chlorpyrifos) in the hopper. With tractor sitting fairly level, with the pto shaft about level, running at the same rpm as the course was driven, open the gate for a few seconds at a time (to conserve product); determine the width of the pattern. It may be best to do this over bare soil, perhaps in rows or middles if a field is close or recently mowed areas. Wind will greatly affect the pattern. Avoid testing over concrete or asphalt because the particles bounce and do not provide a true spread. Lay a stick on the outer edges of the pattern. Measure from stick to stick. Do not be concerned with the few particles that go beyond the average pattern.  
Draw several lines on paper representing rows. Knowing the width of the middles and that 10' outside of the block must be treated, plan where the spreader must be driven to accomplish the goal. Would a narrower pattern fit your fields better than the maximum width? Lower the Vicon to achieve the width needed.
- 4- Bring the equipment to a convenient location, close to scales that are out of the wind. Remove the spout.
- 5- Adjust the gate-opening knob to zero.
- 6- I use a clean, dry 39 gal poly bag to catch bait. Some method will be needed to hold the bag with bait on the scales without the bag falling or hanging off the edges enough to affect the weight. My scales came with a tray. A piece of 10" x 10" cardboard may work.
- 7- Weigh the empty bag and tray or cardboard. Record it. Have a calculator handy.
- 8- For the time required to drive the course, catch bait. Two people are required to hold the bag around the base of the Vicon and hold it in place. Have the tractor driver, with tractor running at same rpm, open the gate lever and release the clutch to engage the pto at the same time as someone begins a stopwatch. I have been able to operate the watch and hold the bag on the left side so the driver and I face each other.
- 9- I let the driver know I plan to count 1, 2, 3 and I start the stopwatch when I see the lever move or the pto shaft begin turning. Be aware of the danger of a rotating PTO shaft (it can be lethal !!!).
- 10- I also explain that if we plan on catching for 50 seconds, I will notify everyone involved of the time every 10 seconds; that I will count 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, STOP .... Loud enough for all to hear above the sound of the tractor.

