

Guidelines for pruning and spraying of palm trees

The following guidelines are being recommended by the Directorate to be used for the prevention and control of the Red Palm Weevil (*Rynchophorus ferrugineus* Olivier) on palm trees by nurseries, garden centres, Government entities, non-Governmental organisations, private individuals and all other palm owners.

1. Pruning

- Pruning of palm trees should be carried out as much as possible during the winter or cooler months, when the adult weevil is less active and is less likely to infect the tree.
- The fronds should be cut as short as possible so as to minimize infective areas which are generally concentrated at the base of the fronds. The base of the frond should be sealed with an appropriate pruning sealant or copper sulphate mixed as a paste.
- The palm trees from which the fronds are cut shall be sprayed with an appropriate insecticide immediately following pruning. Treatments are intended to eliminate adult weevils both at the laying stage and if eggs are already present, in order to eliminate emerging weevils.

2. Application of chemical treatment

The following actions are suggested when interventions on palm trees such as pruning or dendrosurgery have been carried out. Healthy, non-infected palm trees within 50 m radius from infected or felled palm trees should also be chemically treated.

- Insecticide should be applied as a drench of 10 to 20 litres of solution at the crown of the palm tree. It is advisable to also add a systemic fungicide to the solution to prevent fungal infection from entering the tree following pruning.
- Between the application of one treatment and another, it is important to alternate between different authorised active ingredients in order to prevent the red palm weevil from building up resistance against one particular insecticide. This is caused

by successive treatments using same active ingredients. It is recommended that the appropriate advice is sought in this regard.

- It is important to follow the insecticide product label so as to ensure that it is adequate for the purpose for which it is to be used and that the correct dosage is applied. Palm owners shall keep a record of the treatments carried out on palms, in terms of Schedule I to these guidelines.

Palm owners shall consult the Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority (MCCAA) website for an updated list of active ingredients of insecticides and fungicides which are officially permitted to be used in Malta.

Schedule I

Insecticide treatment records for palms

Date of treatment	Location	Palm species treated	Number of palms treated	Product name	Active ingredient	Amount applied	Name of operator/ Signature

23rd February, 2018