

## Results of the July 2025 Arrowsic Pesticides Survey

Dear Arrowsic Friends and Neighbors:

The article in the [spring issue](#) of *The Arrowsic Arrow* briefly touched on the townwide pesticides survey conducted by the Arrowsic Conservation Commission (ACC) last summer. With this new communication, a slightly deeper dive will be taken with a few more details. However, and most important, following your reading of this summary, will be the entire, unedited results of the survey for your review. When you have finished, please send any comments, feedback, or questions to: [conserve@arrowsic.org](mailto:conserve@arrowsic.org).

### We Have Learned A Lot:

- Thank you to the 79 households that responded to the survey. This represents 30% of the town population. Where 25% is considered a statistically valid return, we can feel all the more confident that the data gathered is a representative sampling of our town.
- Major pests of concern:
  - A large majority of the town, 72%, considers ticks the primary concern, where winter moth, mosquitos, and browntail moth came in at just below 50%, and mammals and invasive plants at just above 30%.
  - Several comments indicated a general tolerance for perceived pests that did not require any action.
- Of 79 responses, 51% said they apply pesticides.
- Of 35 responses, 66% indicated insecticides are the primary pesticide used.
- Of 35 responses, 63% use synthetic pesticides, and 49% use organic pesticides.
- 54% of households apply pesticides themselves, 31% hire a professional applicator, and 14% do both.
- Of 35 responses, 57% of pesticide applications are targeted/spot, and 31% are broadcast.
- Several comments expressed concern about neighbors' pesticide applications.
- 78% of households are concerned about the potential human health and environmental impact of pesticide use, while 19% are not concerned. One comment expressed "extreme" concern.



*Blacklegged ticks. From left, the larva, nymph, adult female, and adult male. (Photo Credit: [Fairfax County/Flickr/Creative Common](#))*

In the near future, probably late summer, early fall, the ACC will be hosting presentations on how to respond to the various pests identified, *in the least toxic way*.

In the context of all this, something to consider: [The Precautionary Principle](#), adopted by governments around the world, takes a very simple, but powerful approach: "When an activity

raises threats of harm to human health or the environment, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause-and-effect relationships are not fully established scientifically."

*When there's doubt, don't do it.  
Think First, Spray Last!*

The intention of this principle is to protect the health of ourselves, our families, the food web, and the environment—and, in the case of Arrowsic, the island's water source.

It can take many years of research and testing to prove the danger of a particular chemical and, by that time, irreparable damage may already have occurred. Take the examples of DDT, where the facts of its persistence and how harmful it was to the environment, took almost 40 years to be fully realized. And PFAS, the scourge that's upon us now, the so-called "forever chemicals," finally being banned all over the world after more than 80 years in use—with Maine leading the way.

Pesticides are toxic chemicals, and can often have unintended consequences, making them a prime example of where the Precautionary Principle could be of great benefit to our civilization and our planet. In fact, the [European Union](#) and [Canada](#) have adopted it, and it has been codified in [Norway's constitution](#).

*Thank you again for caring for our island.*

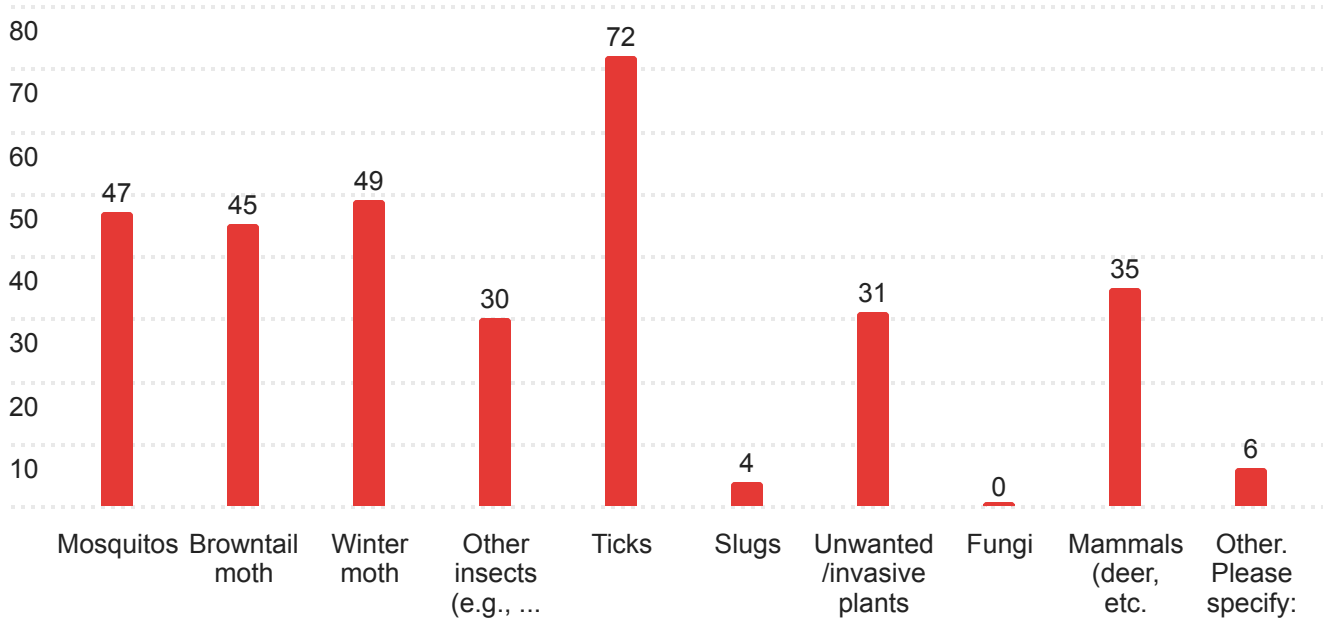
*—The Arrowsic Conservation Commission*

# Arrowsic Pesticide Survey Results

October 2025

Q1 - What kinds of living things do you consider to be a problem on your property? Please check all that apply.

79 Responses



## Other. Please specify:

various species are present but not problematic

roof moss and wood rot

garden invaders

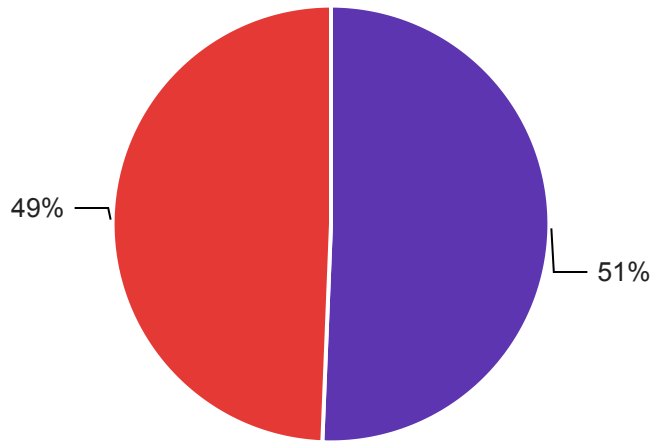
I have some of the others, but not to a level to consider them "pests"

Brown tail moth was a problem but is no longer, mosquitoes reduce the fun of being outside, I am very allergic but I don't consider them a problem that needs to be addressed

poison ivy

### Q3 - Do you use pesticides of any kind to manage unwanted living things on your property?

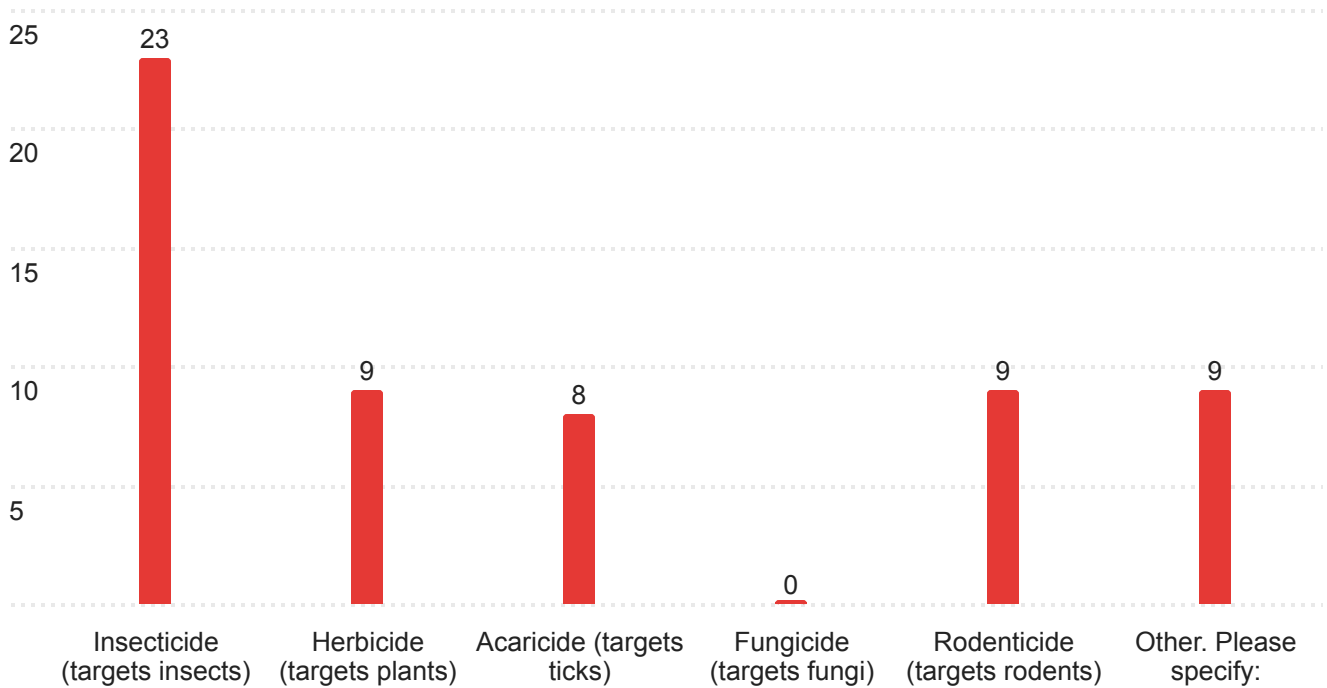
79 Responses



■ Yes ■ No

### Q4 - Which types of pesticides do you use? Please check all that apply.

35 Responses



### Other. Please specify:

Diatomaceous earth

Deer Off

tick boxes

Deer Off

deer repellent ( rotten eggs)

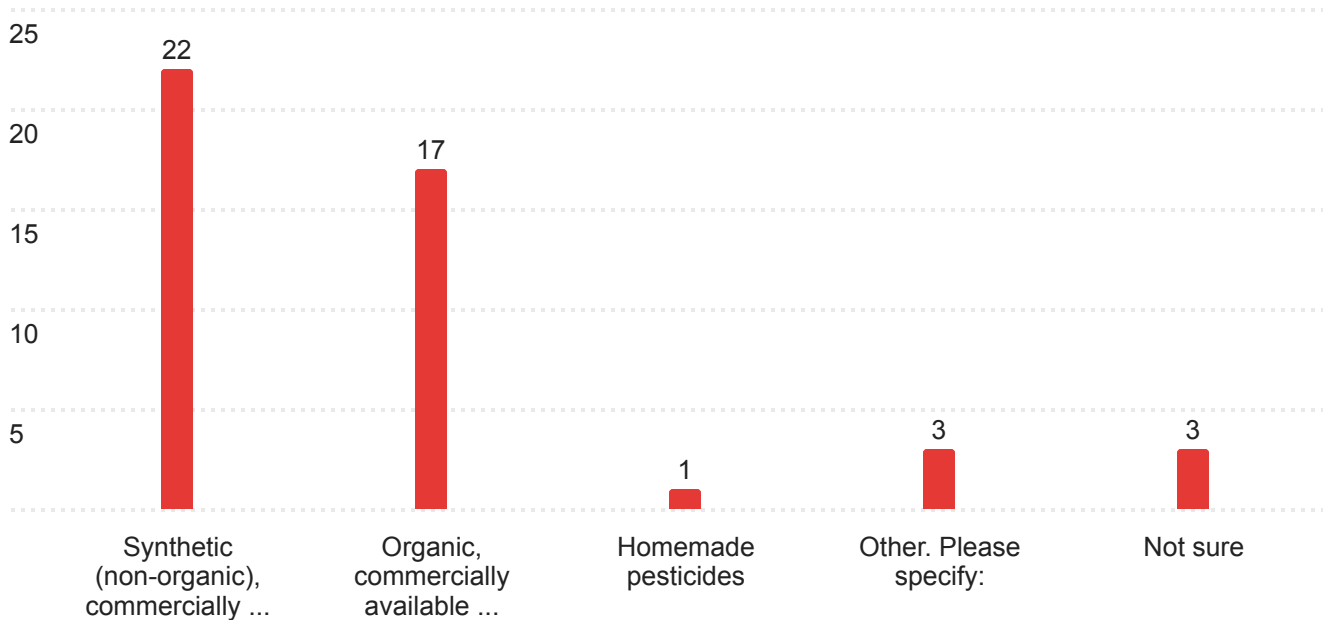
Dish soap as a spray on plants

spray foundation for ants

Stink spray to repel deer

### Q5 - Which best describes the types of pesticides you use? Please check all that apply.

35 Responses



### Other. Please specify:

Round up for Japanese Knotweed

Not sure cause have a service that deals with insects, guessing synthetic

## Q6 - If you know, what is the name of the pesticide(s) you use?

20 Responses

Round Up

Bt

Not sure

Mosquito Dunks Cutter yard spray- mosquito and tick Professionally applied moth spray

bromethalin, fipronil

Neem oil; BT

Deer Off

Raid, Modern Pest

BT

Neem oil, ant traps, mouse snap traps, I shoot overabundance of chipmunks and red squirrels near house

Permethrin

neem oil, "Liquid Fence"

diluted Hannaford brand Dawn soap

Home Defense for the ants. Something for ticks in a small area.

Terro liquid ant bait. Spectracide wasp & hornet killer.

Talstar

permethrin

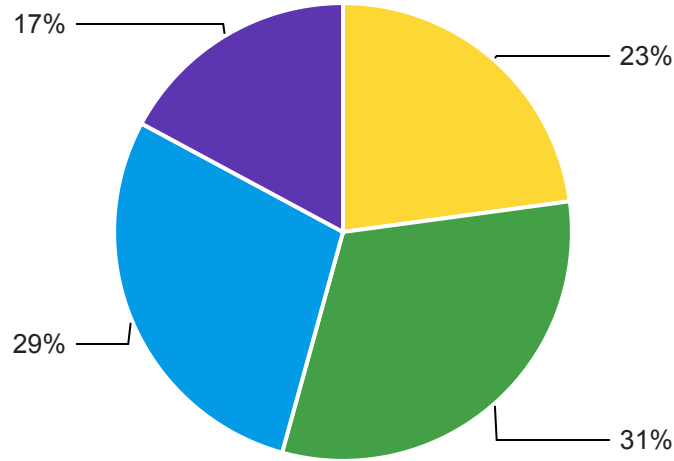
Ortho home defense

Various ant baits; Raid for wasps; Liquid Fence deer repellent; glyphosate.

Safer's Insecticidal Soap

### Q7 - About how often do you apply pesticides?

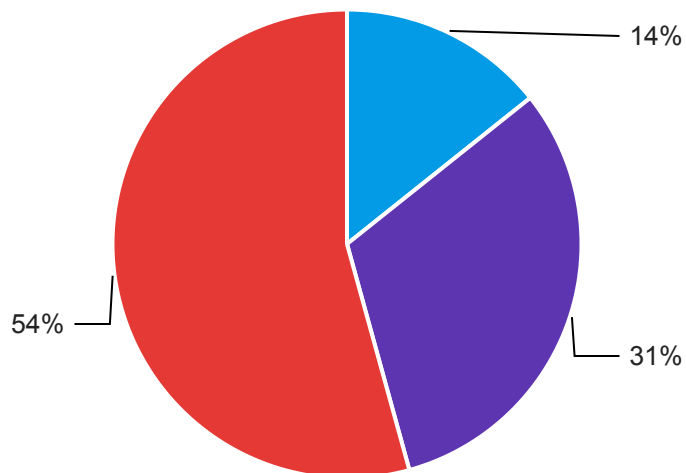
35 Responses



Other. Please specify: As needed One to two times a season Monthly

### Q8 - Who typically applies pesticides on your property?

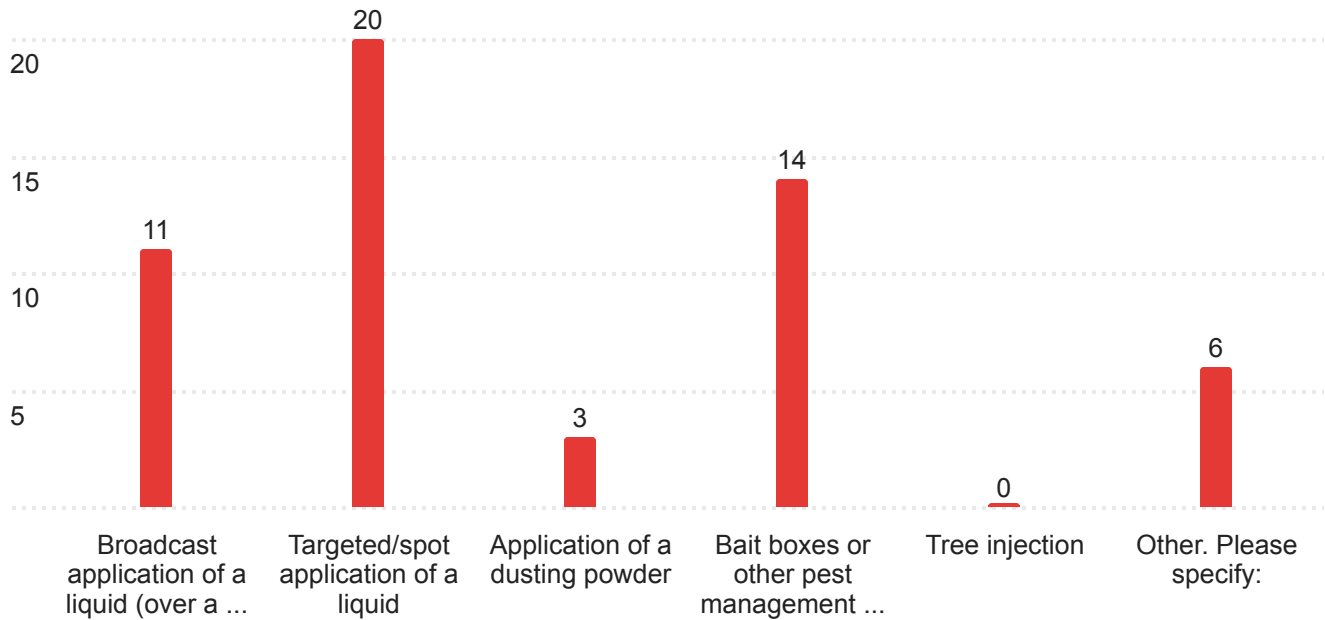
35 Responses



Both I hire a professional pesticide applicator I, or someone in my household, typically applies pesticides

Q9 - Which method(s) best describes how pesticides are applied on your property? Please check all that apply.

35 Responses



### Other. Please specify:

Only on Knotweed plants, in the "window"

Inside house only

Mosquito dunks in standing water

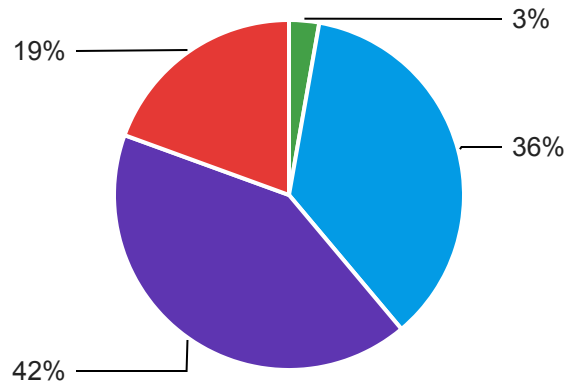
Tick tubes

spray the foundation of the house so not sure what category that falls under

spray foundation once a year

## Q10 - Are you concerned about the potential human health and/or environmental impact of pesticide use on your property, or the possibility of pesticides drifting from a surrounding property?

72 Responses



■ Not sure
 ■ Yes, very concerned
 ■ Yes, somewhat concerned
 ■ No, not concerned

## Q11 - Would you like to share any additional information about your pesticide use with the Conservation Commission?

Don't use pesticides for any other problem, just the Knotweed that is very, very invasive and hard to kill.

We are planning to stop using the rodenticide application in the near future (within the next month).

I do set traps for mice with peanut butter not poison. I drown Japanese beetles in soapy water. Occasionally I use Safer's Insecticidal soap for caterpillars. I garden organically and use mechanical means to deal with invasives.

By this spring for the winter moth. We used a commercial sprayer for the brown tail moths five years ago.

Winter Moths are a huge problem on our property. We are afraid we will lose our Oak trees in our yard if we don't try to control the problem.

I don't use pesticides, but my neighbor has sprayed in the past.

tick boxes have no impact on pollinators, but seem to be effective with ticks.

If it were possible, I would say "extremely concerned." We are surrounded by all kinds of chemicals with no idea what impact they have on our health, directly and indirectly. We live in Arrowsic because we want to live in the woods. So we accept that we'll have to deal with the insects and animals that are here. It is heartbreaking to see white moth damage on the trees, but that doesn't mean we should spread cancer causing chemicals or compounds that will kill of bees and other beneficials.

We use organic orchard methods only, but this year lost apple , cherry and pear crop to winter moth

The application doesn't seem to effect the bird population at my home

The only pesticide use I have used are: 1) personal application of insect sprays from time to time (both DEET based and natural); 2) a few years ago I tried making my own tick solution (permethrin soaked cotton balls stuffed in toilet paper tubes and placed around the yard - mimicking a product I had seen) - Some of the cotton in the tubes were used by animals, but I wasn't able to tell a significant change based on them so I've not done this again. Mostly, I just am careful (long sleeves and pants when working outside/walking, tick checks for humans and pets, etc.) and general awareness of the insect cycles (I'm in a downturn at my property for ticks over the past month or so (July).

We are very environmentally conscious and limit and non organic pesticides. Use only what we need to.

all pesticides or herbicides are organic certified

Concerned about neighbor's use. The signs posted seem to be mostly about mosquitos but I wonder.

We try to target pests that hurt our house (mice-wires), ant infestations with as little pesticide that still is effective. Similarly to plants that hurt our native/other plants although we try to pull those up by hand as much as possible.

I would like to learn about the currently best practices for reducing invasive species, especially bittersweet which is spreading in the neighborhood. For the mosquitoes we sometimes (5times a summer) use a thermacell metofluthrin device outdoors for about an hour

I consider the multiflora rose and bittersweet vines to be the most offensive plants on my property. neither is killed by the 'organic' herbicides I've used. We try manual removal but it's impossible to keep up. Additionally, we use a pest control service that maintain bait boxes for rodents.

We use NONE.

at least one neighbor has "pest control" for lawn care and rodents that we are concerned about. No idea what's being used.

my uses of pesticides (and traps) are very targeted and limited. The only frequent application is spraying neem oil on lilacs and select small-leaf rhodos. Otherwise, spot herbicide on barberry and specific weeds, BT dust on garden, occasional rodenticide.