

PROPANE GUNS AND SCARING DEVICES

A few tips about propane canons, zon guns and other scare devices to help increase the effectiveness of bird control while reducing the unnecessary use impact on the neighborhood.

Birds roost before dark. During the time from sunset until dark birds cease feeding and seek their roosts. If roosts are located away from the area to be protected there is no need to continue using a scaring device after the birds have left. (UC Agricultural Extension Animal Briefs #19)

If the problem is a small number of birds roosting the most effective control method is shooting individual birds on their arrival. When bird movement has stopped after dark, the scaring technique should also be stopped. Continued scaring can lead to habituation of the birds to sounds and reduce responses. (Bird Dispersal Techniques, Thurman W. Booth) – **Do not use noise devices after dark!**

Most birds leave their roost ½ hour after dawn. If the problem is *birds roosting* in the area then shooting individual birds is the most effective bird control method between first light and 1/2 hour before sunrise. If the problem is *birds feeding* in the area, the scare device can be operated upon the arrival of the birds. (Bird Dispersal Techniques, Thurman W. Booth) – **Do not use a noise device until ½ hour before sunrise, or until birds arrive to feed.**

The scare device should face the area to be protected. For the most efficient results, the device should be placed near the edge of the property pointing towards the center of the property over the top of the crop to be protected. (UC Agricultural Extension Animal Briefs #19) – **Do not point device away from area to be protected.**

Birds quickly habituate to noise. Change the location of the device every two to three days. Do not operate the device continuously, birds will habituate quickly. Operate with noise every 2-3 minutes for the first hour, then once every 20-30 minutes during the day, then once every 2-3 minutes during the last ½ hour. Sometimes shooting birds can increase effectiveness by reinforcing danger to the noise. At best, scaring devices are limited to short-term control. (Bomford & O'Brien) Do not use scaring devices unless there is a need.