

Non-technical summary

Two New Termite (Isoptera: Rhinotermitidae) Feeding Indexes for Woods of Varying Palatability

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Termites do not consume all species of wood with equal preference; they readily consume some and avoid others. Also, termites will sometimes eat unpalatable woods in the absence of more preferred choices. Common tests of termite preference or wood resistance may lead to inaccurate results because they do not take these two facts into account. In order to scientifically evaluate a wood species for termite resistance, two new feeding indexes are proposed by the authors. These indexes incorporate feeding test results when the termites are forced to eat the wood in question, and when they have a choice between the test wood and a preferred wood species. The two indexes allow a scientific comparison of two wood species, based on the index values, to determine the more resistant wood species, something not possible before.