AG NOTE

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westernAG
The Best in Agronomic Advice

DERRINALLUM (Head Office)
P (03) 5597 6622 F (03) 5597 6773
E admin@westernag.com.au
W www.westernag.com.au

HORSHAM
P (03) 5382 2488 F (03) 5382 3288
BANNOCKBURN
P (03) 5281 2840 F (03) 5281 2894
NHILL
P (03) 5391 3386 F (03) 5391 3584
KANIVA
P (03) 5392 2911 F (03) 5392 2380

Phil Hawker
0427 367542

Gerard O'Brien
0419 801485

Ashley Perkins
0458 822066

James Jess
0419 801650

Michaela Alexander
0428 976555

Matthew Barber
0488 298170

Introduction

From everyone at Western AG, welcome to the Spring edition of our newsletter. At the time of writing ,Western Victoria is experiencing hot dry winds that are causing crop and pasture stress. The lack of moisture and frost has meant that some crops have already be cut and turned into hay which is extremely disappointing.

Making a decision to cut a crop for hay, and when to do so, is not easy. Factors that need to be considered include dry matter production versus grain yield, hay versus grain prices, operation costs and fungicide withholding periods. Significant benefits of cutting a crop for hay that need to be also kept in mind include weed seed set reduction and soil moisture conservation. Our agronomy team have extensive experience in this decision making and are certainly available to help.

Business Update

It is with great pleasure to announce that Danny Ansell and Edwina Simpson have joined the Western AG team and will be working from our new Kaniva branch. Danny is working as the Branch Manager and Edwina is providing agronomic services to farmers in the area.

Danny has lived in Kaniva since 1989 and believes he has just recently been considered a local in town! He has been with Elders in Kaniva for over seven years, prior to this he worked on a broad acre cropping farm in the area for two years and as a shed builder for five years before that. Danny's interests include cycling and AFL having previously played for Kaniva Leeor United Football Club where he is a past Committee Member and currently runs for the A grade team. Danny is married with two daughters aged seven and five.

We are also keen to start farm planning for clients that are interested from now on. The benefit of this is to be able to put together paddock strategies early and be on the 'front foot' with input budgets and seed requirements.

In the meantime, we have everything crossed wishing for finishing rains on crops and pastures that can still use them. We hope you find the information in our newsletter helpful and we look forward to supporting your business in as many ways as possible.

10 YEARS 2005 - 2015

Western AG is celebrating 10 years in business this year.

Our promise to you is to continue to provide the latest farm production technology and best possible service.

We thank you very much for your support.

Edwina Simpson
0439 622867

Danny Ansell
0447 166278

Edwina has worked as an Agronomist in the Kaniva area for two years for Elders, prior to this she was based at Horsham. She grew up on a family farm at Oaklands in Southern NSW and studied Agricultural Business Management at Charles Sturt University, Orange Campus. Edwina is active in local sport being a keen netball player.

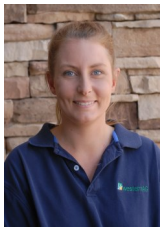
We are absolutely wrapped to have Danny and Edwina join Western AG and know they will be able to provide an excellent service to farmers in the area.

Trudy McCann
AgInvest
0438 725008

Matt Witney
0488 298621

Tim Hofmaier
0488 298222

Edwina Simpson
0439 622867



Annabelle Jacka
0409 741427

Nick Zordan
0427 823062

Braydn Robertson
0438 976557

Fungicide Review for Current Seasonal Conditions (by Michaela Alexander)

Fungicide strategies are specifically tailored to which variety is being grown, disease susceptibility, the growth stage of crop, yield potential of the crop and weather conditions contributing to disease infection and the likelihood of disease spreading or continuing to reinfect.

Current spring conditions consisting of warmer, drier days should reduce the severity of Septoria providing it has not spread well up the crop canopy, however if rain becomes favourable it will suit the other fungal diseases such as rusts and mildews.

Firstly, it is worth mentioning a new exotic leaf rust pathotype that was first detected in a Revenue crop in SA mid last year and was also detected across many sites in Victoria. This rust is has the ability to spread widely and be the dominant strain found in crops this season. How susceptible Revenue is to this new strain is not yet known. In addition to Revenue, Beaufort, Trojan, Bolac and Derrimut also have lower provisional rust ratings until more data comes to hand.

Across the district we haven't seen a lot of rust present in crops over the past few years as we have been actively spraying for Septoria which occurs earlier in the season. This is likely to be masking any rust infections that have been around.

- Stripe rust of wheat requires temps of less than 18°C primarily 6-12°C and a min of 3 hours leaf wetness for infection to begin.
- Leaf rust in wheat needs wet conditions and temps between 15-22°C.
- Stem rust in wheat which we only see if we get good spring rains and warm temps of 15-30°C.
- Powdery mildew of barley needs high humidity and temps of 15-25°C

The "money leaves" are the leaves that contribute most towards final yield and they differ from wheat to barley. This means that fungicide timing also differs in terms of the growth stage of each crop. Following are registered fungicide products.

WHEAT:

- Prosaro® (210g/L Prothioconazole + 210g/L Tebuconazole) - stripe, leaf & stem rust, powdery mildew, Septoria and YLS
- Opus®125 (125g/L Epoxiconazole) - leaf and stem rust, powdery mildew, Septoria
- Amistar Xtra® (200g/L Azoxystrobin + 80g/L Cyproconazole) - stripe and leaf rust, powdery mildew, YLS.
- Radial® (75g/L Azoxystrobin + 75g/L Epoxiconazole) - stripe rust and leaf rust, powdery mildew, YLS.
- Tazer Xpert (80g/L Azoxystrobin + 31.25g/L Epoxiconazole) – leaf, stem and stripe rust, powdery mildew and Septoria.
- Folicur®430 (430g/L Tebuconazole) – leaf, stripe & stem rust, Septoria, YLS
- Tilt Xtra® (250g/L Propiconazole + 80g/L Cyproconazole) - stripe, leaf and stem rust, Septoria, YLS.

BARLEY:

- Prosaro® (210g/L Prothioconazole + 210g/L Tebuconazole) - leaf rust and powdery mildew, scald and both net blotches.
- Amistar Xtra® (200g/L Azoxystrobin + 80g/L Cyproconazole) - leaf rust and powdery mildew, & both net blotches.
- Radial® (75g/L Azoxystrobin + 75g/L Epoxiconazole) - leaf rust and powdery mildew, scald and NFNB.
- Folicur®430 (430g/L Tebuconazole) – powdery mildew and scald.

Strobilurin fungicides or commonly known as Strobi's, such as Amistar Xtra® or Radial®, are excellent protectant fungicides however, they don't penetrate the leaf surface well. Triazole fungicides on the other hand have curative ability and easily penetrate the leaf surface.

Triazole fungicide application showing increased "greening effect"

It is important to note that foliar fungicides do not move through the plant towards any new growth, but can move up from the base of a leaf towards the tip. Leaves that are not fully emerged at time of spraying and do not come into contact with the fungicide will not be protected.

Epoxiconazole (Opus®125) is a slower moving fungicide, therefore provides good residual activity. Older and cheaper Tebuconazole (Folicur®) and Propiconazole (Tilt®) products are less affective against Septoria but still have reasonable activity on rusts.
It is important as we move closer to the end of the season and decisions are being made on cutting some crops for hay that the withholding periods for the specific fungicide are known and adhered to. Products can vary from as low as 14 days for Prosaro to six weeks for Opus and Radial.

Please seek sound advice from your agronomist to ensure the right product is matched for the right crop, disease and yield potential.

Summer Fodder Crop Options & Winter Canola update (by James Jess)

FORAGE BRASSICA'S

It's that time of year again. Spring has arrived, the birds are chirping, and many growers are thinking of summer cropping options. Below are some best bets for the forage brassica program for 2015.

Winfred is a top performing forage brassica that is known for it's versatility and adaptability. Plants can be grazed 10 to12 weeks after sowing, or can be left out to 13 weeks to fully mature. Winfred does have a ripening requirement although early grazing has been successful in the past for the control of DBM. Winfred is a bit of an all-rounder as it will grow in areas of low to medium fertility, giving you quality feed from summer through to winter.

Sub Zero is an early maturing persistent forage brassica with rapid regrowth under ideal conditions. It can be sown from spring through to autumn with the potential to carry through winter thanks to its cold tolerance characteristic. This means high production and palatability can be kept through the colder months for winter grazing. Grazing can commence around 8-9 weeks post sowing, or can be left to fully mature out to 13 weeks.

Stego is a high yielding forage brassica boasting rapid establishment, producing high quality feed, with excellent regrowth characteristics ideally suited for dairy, beef and sheep systems. This is a very similar variety to Winfred in that it has 10-12 weeks until first grazing, with the option to graze multiple times. Stego can be planted in either spring or autumn as a winter crop option. This will be suited to most soil types in the medium to high rainfall areas.

Hunter is a quick maturing forage brassica suited to climates that receive good summer rainfall or irrigation. It requires med-high soil fertility and is often used as a summer finishing crop. Grazing can commence 6-8 weeks post sowing so it's ideally suited to graziers where feed supply is required quickly with no ripening requirement. Experience tells you Hunter will not have longevity like a Winfred variety. This is understandable considering the key difference of offering quick quality feed rather than long lasting feed.

Seeding rates for all forage brassica's will range from 3-4kg/ha. The best fertiliser option is either MAP / DAP 100-120kg/ha. Contact your agronomist for further details and which variety will be best suited to your enterprise.

LUCERNE

Planting Lucerne in Spring is generally a far better option than Autumn sown. Spring sown Lucerne gets in and out of the ground quickly and begins to grow into rising temperatures at a rapid rate which is excellent for weed competition. Similarly, a good hot summer often means the Lucerne has to penetrate deep into the profile to find adequate moisture allowing for a strong stand into the future. Trifluralin incorporated by sowing (IBS) is a must when planting Lucerne for early weed control, particularly hogweed, which can be a problem. Ideal seeding rates should be 10 to 15kg/ha for the HRZ and should always be planted with adequate fertiliser such as MAP or DAP @ 100-120kg/ha.

Icon is a high yielding semi-winter active (7) variety boasting excellent summer regrowth and, throughout the past few seasons, has been a proven performer. It is a moderately tall variety with semi-erect leafy stems giving it excellent hay production qualities. If growers are looking for a variety to produce high quality hay with excellent recovery from cutting as well as good survival under grazing, then Icon is the ideal choice.

GTL 60 is a new Australian bred variety from seed distributors, ideally suited as a dual purpose grazing tolerant Lucerne with the option to cut quality hay. This variety has a winter activity rating of 6, and has a minimum rainfall requirement of 350mm. It offers a high feed quality in the bale and in grazing situations with excellent recovery characteristics giving it the longevity required.

Sardi 7 is an old time favourite which has proven itself to be a very persistent variety since its release many years ago. This variety is suited to growers wanting premium hay cutting combined with high persistence. For those growers wanting a rough and ready hardy Lucerne stand then this variety should be considered.

Stamina 5 is a semi-dormant grazing tolerant Lucerne with very little winter growth. Throughout the warmer months it delivers excellent yield and quality especially under dryland conditions. Stamina 5 can withstand prolonged periods of set stocking, and has been a proven performer in trials leading up to its release. The persistence of this variety is outstanding and ease of management means it's a top choice if you want a hardy, persistent type Lucerne with the option of cutting some quality hay.

Venus is another excellent variety that has performed very well finishing in trials second only to stamina 5. It is a similar variety to Stamina 5 offering both outstanding persistence and productivity in dryland systems. This is commonly the "fall back" variety when Stamina 5 availability gets tight.

WINTER CANOLA

Hyola 970CL, the "winter canola" has made an impressive impact on grazing and cropping systems over the past few years since its release. The variety of choice for many is HYOLA 970CL which is a high performing dual purpose canola suited in medium to high rainfall areas. This is the second variety out of Pac Seeds being the direct replacement to HYOLA 971CL. This variety has improved yield, better blackleg resistance, increased biomass production, and better water logging resistance. The Clearfield technology characteristic of this variety is a must when considering a winter canola planted in Spring, as it allows for the canola to act as an excellent weed break with a broadleaf control option also available. Best sown late in September through to mid-late October this variety is a very tough plant once it is established. Winter canola will allow excellent grazing options that can run right up to the autumn break and potentially beyond with a comparable yield potential to finish.

Edimax CL variety is a new line out of AGF seeds which is showing promise as an excellent alternative to the HYOLA 970CL. It allows for summer grazing with excellent recovery combined with Clearfield technology to ensure the crop is kept at its cleanest. Be sure to look out for this variety.

Fence Line Weed Control (by Matt Barber)

Currently, many farmers are looking at spray options for their fence lines to reduce weed burdens and resistant weed issues. One of the key issues surrounding fence line spraying is the occurrence of herbicide resistant populations of annual ryegrass which can be detrimental to our cropping system. According to the Glyphosate Sustainable Working Group, 53 out of the documented 189 sites with glyphosate resistant annual ryegrass are fence line situations (Preston, 2010).

A major component of fence line spraying is the lack of competition and mechanical intervention. Taking the reliance off glyphosate is paramount and growers need to be aware of the associated dangers with spraying glyphosate year in year out for the control of crop borders.

Fence lines are typically areas on the farm with chemical fallow as the standard. These areas should be treated the same as any other part of the farm with herbicide resistance a key focus. Therefore, growers need to work with their agronomist in order make informed decisions about the best strategies to achieve lasting control. Timeliness of fence line spraying is the key to good results. There needs to be a shift to earlier applications when the fence lines are populated by a small number of actively growing weeds with plenty of visible ground.

Untreated Fence Line

Mechanical control of herbicide resistant weeds is proven. Hay cutting is one of the unique ways to ensure that weeds seeds don't make it back into the seed bank and more importantly into the paddock. Growers need to consider the benefits of cutting the first round of all cereal crops and exporting the weed seeds off the paddock in a bale. This ensures any Annual Ryegrass moving in from the fence line is quickly eliminated.

Using a "double knock" on fence lines is also an excellent strategy to make sure effective control of glyphosate resistant weeds is achieved. Two applications of Spray Seed or Paraquat 14 days apart will give you excellent results with the bonus opportunity to add residual chemistry in the second mix. Obviously, this is not an ideal strategy for a fence line situation but, if you start to highlight the problem fence lines, it may be the best strategy.

Growers need to be doing whatever they can to avoid fence line weeds moving into their production zones. Residual and long acting herbicides should be used to improve the longevity of control. They are ideally partnered with a knockdown herbicide for best results. Chemical options include:

Uragan (800g/kg Bromacil)
Uragan is a Group C herbicide that provides residual control of resistant weed populations. This product is best applied in combination with a knock-down herbicide on young winter weeds ideally within 10 weeks of germination. The ideal mix for a typical fence line would be 2kg/ha Uragan + 2.5-3L/ha Spray Seed. A mix such as this should give you 10 to 12 months of bare earth control. Care must be taken when using this product as it can cause damage to native trees within 50 meters of the spraying zone.

Due to its strong residual, the Uragan can be taken up by the roots resulting in a slow death. Eucalypt trees are especially sensitive. A typical bike mounted boom of 1.5m width means the Uragan @2kg/ha is priced at $21/km + the non selective herbicide. Consider applying this product as early in the season as possible so you avoid over grown fence lines later in the year.

Alliance
(Amitrole 250g/L+ Paraquat 125g/L)
Alliance offers a glyphosate alternative offering a dual action killing green tissue on contact before starving the weed to death. Therefore, weed control is usually better resulting in fewer transplants and less survivors. The primary benefit of alliance is the resistance management opportunities you gain from not using any glyphosate in the fence line mix. Typically this product will be applied at 4l/ha which is priced around $9.12/km for a 1.5m width bike boom.

Residual chemistry can be combined with this product to achieve long term control although, this product is best reserved for situations where the fence lines are overgrown and require a robust brown down (Aug-Sept), unlike Uragan which is best suited early in the program where bare soil is accessible by the spray pattern (March-April).

Treated Fence Line

Arsenal Express (150g/L Imazapyr + 150g/L Glyphosate)
Arsenal Express is a BASF product which offers the combination of a Group M knockdown herbicide combined with a Group B residual herbicide. The issues surrounding this product arise from the included use of Glyphosate as the knockdown, combined with a Group B residual. Herbicide resistant populations of Annual Ryegrass are at great risk of surviving an application due to the level of resistance experienced for both chemical Groups M and B. Therefore, a fence line mix of this nature should only be used if you are confident you are chasing susceptible weeds. However, it is still a better option than using straight glyphosate! This product is quite expensive at 5l/ha costing around $56.15/km and you will also need to be very careful around tree lines as damage can often occur.

More products will be coming onto the market in the future which will offer residual control options.

Resistance Testing
It is a good idea to get your fence lines tested for any glyphosate resistance. This will be the first step to really understanding the dangers of continual glyphosate usage on ryegrass based fence lines. Discuss options with your agronomist for details on how and when to spray and the details of resistance testing.

Nutrient Removal by Crops & Hay (by Matt Witney)

Many growers are entering the hay season now and it can be in the form of export oaten or wheat hay, vetch hay, clover hay, medic hay, or weed infested (mainly ryegrass) or frosted crops that can be cut. Experience has shown that hay can be a very good and profitable crop, with lower risk if there is a dry finish to the year. However, if hay is to be cut, consideration needs to be given to the amount of nutrient removed by the process, especially in light soils. This is important for planning next year's nutrient budget.

Hay production takes considerably more Potassium (K) and Calcium (Ca) out of the soil compared to that of grain harvested crops. Similarly hay also takes out a big share of Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P), Sulphur (S) and Magnesium (Mg) as well as trace elements. This is especially the case when high hay yields have been achieved. Conversely, cutting hay can conserve moisture and remove resistant weeds from paddocks, namely ryegrass and radish.

Chart 1 (see below) shows the difference in nutrient removal between harvesting a crop of wheat and leaving residue behind versus cutting it for hay.

A nutrient audit highlights the removal from a 6T/ha wheat/hay crop and the following should be implemented to maintain the coming years' productivity.

Macro nutrients would include:

- Sibelco Tantanoola Dolomite -: 180kg/ha
- Sibelco Caroline Quarry Lime -: 100kg/ha
- Urea -: 260kg/ha (Less mineralised N from o/c)
- Sulphate of Potash -: 175kg/ha
- MAP @ 55kg/ha + Micro nutrients (Zn, Cu, Mn, B, Mo etc)

Canola crops require double the amount of P and K per tonne of crop compared with cereal crops, and legume crops require roughly double the amount of K as cereals as well.

Nutrient removal is more evident in light sandy soils, already low in nutrient and organic carbon, and highlights the need to continually top up soils with all fertilisers and trace elements, particularly when high yielding crops are achieved. Chicken, duck and pig compost @ 1-4 Tonne/ha is also a great way to improve soil nutrient status. Green or brown manure legume crops, or alternatively a legume phase, is also a good way to improve nutrient status.

It is important to monitor all nutrient removal so, in the event of favourable growing conditions, production will not be limited by macro and micro nutrients. There will also be a greater need for nutrient top up with fertilisers when stubbles are burnt, or if paddocks are subject to wind or water erosion. However, it is rare that all nutrients removed can be replaced by fertiliser and, more often than not, it's simply the growing season rainfall (GSR) that restricts optimal production.

Chart 1. Difference of Nutrient Removal between Harvesting and Hay

	N	P	K	S	Zn	Cu	Ca	Mg	Mn
Wheat 3T/ha	69kg	9kg	12kg	4.2kg	0.09kg	0.015kg	1kg	2.79kg	0.12kg
Wheat Hay @ 6T/ha	120kg	12kg	72kg	9kg	0.12kg	0.03kg	72kg	18kg	0.24kg

Chart 2. Nutrient removal (kg) per 1T/ha product produced

	N	P	K	S	Zn	Cu	Ca	Mg	Mn
Wheat	23	3	4	1.4	0.029	0.005	0.33	0.93	0.04
Barley	20	2.9	4.4	1.1	0.015	0.003	0.35	1.08	0.011
Oats	16.5	3	4	1.5	0.017	0.003	0.5	1	0.04
Canola	40	6.5	9.2	9.8	0.04	0.004	4.1	4	0.04
Lupins	51	3.8	8.8	3.1	0.03	0.005	1.7	1.7	0.06
Chicks	34	3.8	8.9	1.8	0.038	0.007	1.1	1.2	0.034
Beans	39	3.8	9.8	1.4	0.028	0.01	1.1	1	0.03
Peas	37	4	8.2	2	0.035	0.005	0.7	1.2	0.014
Hay	20	2	12	1.5	0.02	0.005	12	3	0.04
Wool	170	.26	15.8	28.5	0	0.003	12	0.3	
Sheep	34	7	2.3	4	0	0.004	14.4	0.4	
Milk	5.7	0.95	1.4	0.3			1.2	0.12	
Stubble									
Wheat	17	1.8	42	2.7					
Canola	18	2.4	70	4.8					
Lupins	17	0.6	26	2.7					

Spray Topping Pastures (by Braydn Robertson)

Spray topping pastures at the right time, with the correct product can significantly reduce the amount of seed set from unwanted grass weeds. This is achieved by using a sub lethal rate of herbicide as the plant is coming out in head and beginning to flower. Two of the most important questions to consider when spray topping your pasture are;

- **When to spray and what product to use?**

In order to answer these key questions, we need to understand the mode of action of each herbicide.

Paraquat *(Gramoxone)* is a contact herbicide that should be used to target grass species which have developed beyond the flowering stage. Growers must be aware that any late developing tillers or heads that are still covered or shaded by the flag will continue to grow and produce viable seed. Therefore it is important to manage the pasture up to the correct timing for application to ensure optimum control is achieved. Ideally, delaying the application of Paraquat to milky dough or dough stage can help reduce any tiller regrowth in the pasture resulting in a high level of seed set control.

Glyphosate *(Weedmaster DST)* is a systemic product and needs time to move through the plant to get adequate control**.** Therefore, naturally it's a product that needs to be applied early in the growth stage of the targeted grass species. Delaying glyphosate through to the dough or milky dough stage will reduce the level of control as many of the seed heads begin to mature before the herbicide is effective.

Barley Grass & Soft Brome - Barley Grass tends to mature and send up seed heads over an extended period of time. Therefore, managing the pasture leading up to spray topping is an important part of successfully control. Ensuring that the pasture is adequately grazed across the paddock will ensure the Barley Grass will mature and develop more evenly. As mentioned glyphosate should be used early on when the seed heads first emerge and before the dough stage. This will ensure it has time to move its way through the plant and control it before it has time to mature and set viable seed.

Growers need to be aware of the risk associated with an early application of glyphosate in a legume based pasture as the flowering time of the legume may coincide with the early glyphosate timing. In this circumstance, glyphosate application can significantly reduce the legume seed set and a later timing using Paraquat would be a safer option as application of Paraquat can be held off until after flowering up until the dough stage before control is reduced.

Silver Grass has a more uniform head emergence than both Barley Grass and Soft Brome. It is important to monitor the pasture closely, and if the soil is drying out and weather is warm, be wary of Silver Grass' ability to progress from flower to hard seed in about a week. Glyphosate needs to be applied in the early head stage and Paraquat slightly later before haying off. Although, because of quick development of the weeds, the best bet option would be to use Paraquat applications in this scenario to avoid the glyphosate failing to control seed set.

Bent Grass can be prolific in the high rainfall zones and is usually a sign of soils lacking fertility. Best control of Bent Grass is achieved when glyphosate is applied before the grass goes to head. Please talk to your agronomist on the appropriate rates needed to control Bent Grass in pastures.

Spray Topping Follow Up
Heavy grazing after spray topping can help with a reduction of the target plant species. Stock will generally select new growth (surviving tillers) as it has an increased palatability and increased digestibility. These spray topped areas may also experience increased protein levels thought to be a result of the halting of grass growth and the movement of carbohydrates and proteins to the seed heads. It is important to read product labels in regards to withholding periods regarding restocking sprayed pastures.

Grain Protectant Options for 2015 (by Tim Hofmaier)

Like many of our agricultural pesticides used today, resistance is an ongoing issue. This is increasingly the case for many of our grain protection products currently used. Over the past 13 years, grain growers have been without a rotation partner for S-Methoprene IGR. As a result, there is now resistance spread across the east coast of Australia and IGR is failing to control grain insects and pests. BRM (Bioresmethrin), another Synthetic Pyrethroid (SP), was the last control option growers had for rotations. This product was banned in 2001 due to residues being found in the meat of treated grain fed stock.

A new SP called K-Obiol Combi was released in 1998 by Bayer, that again gives growers residual grain protection options with great results against resistant strains of stored grain pests. Initially, the K-Obiol was only commercially released to Bulk Handlers, but it has been available to growers from 2012. K-Obiol contains Deltamethrin and Piperonyl Butoxide as a synergist. This product provides excellent protection for up to at least 9 months when mixed with Reldan or Fenitrothion. It can be used on all grain cereals including Malt Barley. **Note: Clients must be accredited before it can be used on their farms.** Please contact your Western Ag store for more information on this procedure.

More recently, Conserve On-Farm from Dow has been released. This is a unique product that contains three active ingredients combining two products Chlorpyrifos-methyl plus S-Methoprene (Part A) and Spinosad (Part B). Conserve On-Farm provides three to nine months of control of lesser grain borer (LGB), rice weevil, granary weevil, rust-red flour beetle, confused flour beetle, and the saw-toothed grain beetle. The LGB has developed resistance to Methoprene in some areas, which is why the combination of Part A with Part B (Spinosad) makes Conserve On-Farm a powerful new grain protectant that provides complete control of all common stored grain insect pests.

Grain Protectant Options for 2015 continued……..

The only major restriction on using this product is that you **cannot** use it on Malting Barley. Note that there is a requirement to provide your NGR card in the store and fill out the appropriate paper work in order to purchase Conserve On-Farm.

Grain Treatment Options
Harvest packs containing Methoprene IGR still work in some areas but there now appears widespread failures in Victoria due to insect resistance. Today, we are really left with only two viable chemical options that, as with all resistance control strategies, must be rotated to enable continued effectiveness and longevity of control. These two products are K-Obiol and Conserve On-Farm.

- K-Obiol Combi + Fenitrothion is the best option for Malt Barley, but there is a 3 month WHP at the 9 month rate.
- K-Obiol Combi + Reldan is a good option for growers storing wheat and feed barley having a minimal WHP of only 24 hours.
- Conserve On-Farm is a great option for clients wanting to store wheat or feed barley with no WHP.

Grain Storage Hygiene
When it comes to controlling pests in stored grain, prevention is absolutely better that cure, and the first step to reducing the impact of storage pests is to maintain a high level of hygiene in and around the storage area.

Grain residues in storages or older grain stocks held over from the previous season provide ideal breeding sites for stored grain pests. A bag of infested grain can produce more than one million insects during a year, which can traverse to other grain storages where they will start new infestations.

Directly after harvest is the best time to clean all grain handling equipment and storages, before they become infested with pests. A trial carried out in QLD revealed more than 1000 lesser grain borers in the first 40 litres of grain went through the header at the start of harvest, despite the fact that the header was ‘’considered’’ to have been reasonably clean at the end of the previous harvest. Discarding the first few bags of grain at the start of next harvest is also a good idea.

Dryacide is a structural treatment that assists control of all stored grain insect pests including weevils, beetles, borers and moths. The Dryacide is an inert mineral dust for insect pest control that is effective, cheap and environmentally safe. This product is best suited for treatments in silos and sheds.

Dryacide requires a moving air stream to direct it onto the surface being treated. Throwing the product into silos by hand will not achieve an even cover so will not be effective. If compressed air is available, it’s the most economical and suitable option for on farm use. The Dryacide product can be applied easily by a venturi duster such as the Bolvac BV-22.

Canola Harvesting - Windrowing vs Direct Heading (by Nick Zordan)

Increasingly, the decision for many growers at harvest time is the possibility of direct heading canola or continuing with the tradition of windrowing followed by harvesting. Currently, the windrowing option remains the most common practice although, many growers are now looking at the direct heading as an alternative to lower inputs and to improve their bottom line.

There are many reasons why adoption has not been across the board and that is because all farm entities are individually different. For example the amount of farm debt could influence cash flow and finances, machinery could be either owned or reliant on contractors, there are varying yield potentials resultant from both management and environmental influences, all of which will influence the way growers will make final decisions. Following are some pros and cons for both applications.

Windrowing pros:
- Seeds will ripen faster and more evenly
- Windrows protect the pods resulting in minimised grain loss due to any environmental factors
- Spreads the timing of Canola harvest so canola and barley don’t clash (especially in big programs)
- Cutter-bar spraying can be performed to get extra weed control in the windrowing pass

Windrowing Cons:
- Cost of windrowing is $35ha average
- Poor timing can result in yield loss
- Often reliant on a contractor
- Light/small windrows can blow
- A separate pick-up front is required to harvest (a new one costs about $35,000.00)
- Lumpy windrows are frustrating at harvest

Direct heading pros:
- Harvest is done in just the one pass
- Often can be performed with existing machinery therefore reducing capital outlay (slight modifications such as a cross auger may be required)
- Standing canola dries quickly after a rain event
- Fits into CTF and raised bed systems
- Large, bulky crops which are hard to windrow, can be direct headed easily

Direct heading cons:
- Environmental factors such as wind or hail can result in pod shattering and grain loss (Pod sealer products are available with varying success rates
- Not all varieties are suited to direct heading, there can be yield differences
- Grain loss can be costly if harvest is delayed
- Delayed maturity due to crop “hanging on”

Fence Posts - Treated Pine (CCA vs Creosote) & Concrete (by Aaron Starick)

Preservative Treated Pine (TP) Posts
Many Agricultural structures are made up of timber. The issue with timber is it has many enemies from weather, insects, termites, decay and fire. The only way to help protect the timber is through impregnation or pressure treated wood. TP posts combine strength and durability while also being lighter to handle than concrete posts. They are also very economical to use. When it comes to your own safety you still need to be careful by not breathing in wood dust, avoid contact with eyes, do not burn CCA material and always wear safety protection when needed.

TP POST TYPES

Shaven is the most common as they will have better appearance with a smoother surface. When shaven the post generally has knots that have been cut or shaven off which can affect the strength and integrity of the post.
Cambio posts come with a typical rough surface, they still may have bark and knots sticking out. This obviously affects the look of the post but, with the knots still fully intact, it does make the post stronger and more durable.

TREATMENTS

CCA (Copper, Chromium, Arsenic)
CCA treated timber is protected against weathering, termites, fungi and rot. The treated timber is generally green in colour. This form of treatment is more commonly used because of the lack of smell and vapour compared to that of the creosote post. If correctly treated the timber will last for decades and many typical applications including vineyards, stock enclosures, fences, barns and many other rural applications. CCA treatment presents no danger at all to humans or animals and is easy to use. The CCA treated pine post is the cheaper option post, besides steel posts. The standard 6ft 4-5' post sell for around $7.50 + GST. The lifespan of these posts is generally not as long as the creosote post or concrete post. These posts are readily available from Suppliers and at Western AG.

Creosote
Creosote preservative is one of the oldest and most effective methods of treating timber against the elements. It is made up of oil, tar and other chemicals, can be used in rural areas and provides outstanding durability for timber poles, posts, strainers, and rails. Creosote timber is common in the horse industry as horses do not like the creosote and will not chew the timber.

Over time, the creosote post becomes fire hardened, offering virtually complete resistance to fire damage because they are more difficult to ignite than untreated wood and if they do ignite, more often than not they self-extinguish after a short period because of the lack of burning capabilities. Creosote does have a severe odour and the vapour from freshly treated timber can cause skin burn, so it is critical to wear PPE when handling. The vapour is non-toxic to humans or animals.

Creosote post are more expensive than CCA posts with a 6ft 4-5" priced at approx. $10.50 + GST. However, you can expect these posts to last longer in the ground than a CCA post. Currently, as there is only one creosote post Supplier, the delivery timeframe may be slow. We often have stock of different sizes so call us to check what stock is available. If you are looking at fencing and considering creosote as an option, it would pay to order early.

CONCRETE POSTS

TP posts are more common as Concrete posts can be extremely heavy and hard to work with. However, concrete posts are one of the longest lasting posts with no real danger for damage, decay or being burnt in a fire. Concrete posts are now reinforced precast concrete, making them stronger and more driveable provided you have a post cap to stop them breaking or cracking.

A typical inline concrete post would cost around $12.00 + GST. There are few suppliers of these with different styles of posts. Although most will be similar in size, they tend to have different hole spacings. Both posts and strainers are readily available and in stock at our stores.

For all your fencing requirements please give your local Western AG store a call and we will be happy to help with any request and quoting.

FOR SALE

Fertiliser Shifter

- $14,000 + GST **(Price Reduced)**
- 60 foot
- Good Condition
- Available for inspection at the Willaura Branch

Contact: Brad Everett 0419 801583