

## EPARF Technical Newsletter APRIL 2017

Welcome to the first EPARF technical newsletter for EPARF members. This is a new service being trialled for EPARF members.

If you have any comments, please reply to this email.



### What is happening in the paddock?

- Some vetch, medic and cereal feed has been dry sown. Canola sowing will start dry in some areas, while most will try and wait for a rain in the next 10 days.
- Mice numbers are being carefully monitored with canola cards, or via 100 m x 1 m transects (2-3 active burrows per transect = potential problem). Some baiting will be required on EP.
- Snail baiting has commenced in some areas, while others are waiting for a rain event to get the snails on the ground for more than 24 hours.
- Some late burning of narrow windrows is occurring, and the odd stubble is also being burnt to facilitate seeding or control snails.

### Soil testing

Soil testing has again showed the variability between paddocks and seasons in nitrogen (N) and sulphur (S) levels in paddocks. There is no better tool for helping your N and S input decisions. N levels following legume crops and pastures have ranged from 20 kg/ha to 200 kg/ha i.e. sufficient to grow a crop yielding less than 1 t/ha up to 5 t/ha – without testing you will not know where you sit in this range. If you are not soil testing for N and S, you are guessing how much nutrient will be required to reach your target yield.

### Insects

Populations of red legged earth mites (RLEM) in SA have been confirmed with resistance to common synthetic pyrethroid and organophosphate insecticides. Loss of activity from these widely used insecticide groups means only seed dressings like Gaucho® and fipronil provide some activity on RLEM. Review your intended insecticide program – widespread and often unwarranted use of insecticide still occurs on EP.

Russian Wheat aphid populations have been identified along the eastern coast of EP. It is likely they have spread to other areas of EP. Careful monitoring of crops and volunteer cereals and grasses is required to find them, and work out if control is warranted. Copy and paste this link for more information on this pest and how to identify and manage it

<http://www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/pests/russian-wheat-aphid>

### Blackspot in peas

The Blackspot Manager tool indicates the risk of blackspot is high up until at least 20 April for all peas growing areas of EP. Another rain will be required to initiate spore release and reduce the risk. Peas sown while the blackspot risk is high suffer significant yield loss. Given the rainfall outlook, it is unlikely that the disease risk will be low until early May.

## Herbicide incompatibility issues

Many incompatibility issues/nozzle blockages can be avoided by having a clean boom, avoiding concentrated herbicides from contacting each other, and using the appropriate mixing order for chemicals. Most incompatibility issues can be overcome by filling the tank at least 75% before adding products, and ensuring they are well mixed before adding the next product – this is especially important when using powdered formulations, flowable and soluble concentrate formulations. This GRDC guide provides information on mixing multiple herbicides in a tank:

<https://grdc.com.au/Media-Centre/Media-News/South/2015/01/Getting-chemistry-in-the-spray-tank-right>

## Knockdown rates

Ryegrass is developing metabolic resistance to lower rates of glyphosate e.g. 1 – 1.5 L/ha of a 540ai active is not controlling all ryegrass seedlings in some paddocks on Upper/Central EP. Testing has revealed that rates higher than 1.5 L/ha are still successfully controlling most ryegrass. Use higher rates, and double knock with paraquat/Sprayseed® as often as possible to preserve the activity of glyphosate.

## Pre-emergent herbicides and stubble

All pre-emergent herbicides suffer from loss of activity if they hit stubble rather than soil. The worst affected include trifluralin and triallate (Avadex Xtra®). Products like Sakura® are less tightly bound to stubble and can be washed off with 5 mm or more of rainfall. Recent research also showed that approx. two thirds of prosulfocarb (active in Boxer Gold® and Arcade®) applied to stubble can be washed off.

To make sure you get the best value from your pre-emergent herbicides, apply them so they hit the ground rather than the stubble. Use higher water rates and larger water droplets, slow down and ensure rates are robust.

## Reminders

- Have some mice bait on hand if you anticipate some damage.
- Have a seeding plan.
- Calibrate and level your airseeder.
- Decontaminate boomspray units properly before seeding, and between crop types.
- Pick up pulse inoculant now and keep it in the fridge before use.
- Monitor for insects after the opening rain – Russian wheat aphid is now well established down the eastern side of EP and is likely to be elsewhere.
- Log on to the EPARF EP soil moisture probe network on the EPARF website. Password is eparf and username is eparf.

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