



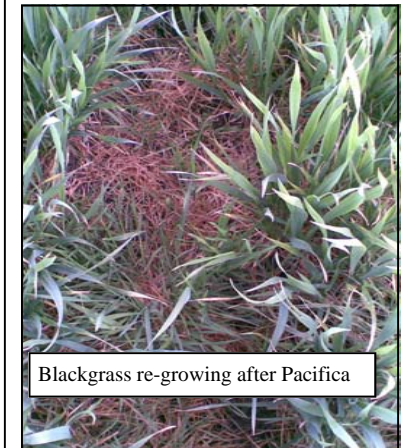
Late Spring/Early Summer Reminders

As the days lengthen good progress is being made with cereal T1 and oilseed rape flowering sprays. Already thoughts begin to turn to the next round of decisions including what to do about mycotoxins and wheat blossom midge—although some current issues need to be dealt with first.



Blackgrass—Areas of poor control

Although a large number of fields have been successfully treated with Atlantis and Pacifica this season a number of cases are being reported where significant re-growth of the grass weeds has occurred. We know that levels of tolerance to the grass weed herbicides are increasing but this may not be the sole cause of poor herbicide performance. All aspects of herbicide performance need to be examined to check for any correctable factor that could have limited the herbicide's effect. Weather conditions—especially their effect on soil temperature and moisture, spray water volumes, nozzle selection, forward speed, droplet and target weed sizes can all have a major impact on weed kill. If application cannot be faulted then arrangements need to be made to test the grass weed for resistance. Knowing the level and type of resistance will allow strategies to be devised to tackle the problem more effectively in the future. Your ProCam agronomist will be able to assist and advise on the appropriate course of action.



Wheat—Mycotoxins

In 2008 we saw very high levels of fusarium ear blights which led to the highest levels of mycotoxins recorded in the last 8 years. The key factor in producing high mycotoxin levels is climate. Wet humid weather at flowering creates the right conditions for fusarium development and mycotoxin levels are particularly increased when wet weather delays harvest as in 2008. Fungicide selection throughout the season can help to reduce mycotoxin levels but the T3 (ear fungicides) timing is especially important. In 2008 independent trials showed that robust doses of triazoles gave very good suppression of fusarium spp and subsequent mycotoxin levels but in all cases these results were enhanced by the use of Mica—an adjuvant specifically designed to improve the uptake and efficacy of the T3 fungicide. Ask your ProCam agronomist for more details

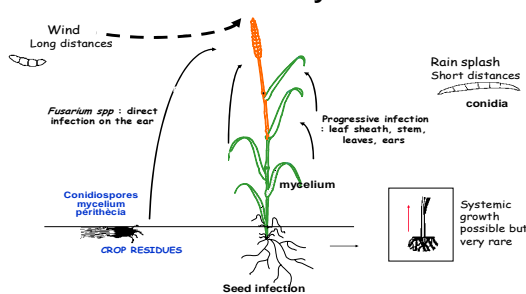


Wheat—Blossom Midge

Just an early reminder to watch out for warnings of Blossom Midge as we progress through May. Pupa-tion starts when soil temperatures are > 13°C and following heavy rain. Monitoring of pupae in the soil and subsequent adult emergence will be taking place and warnings of risk levels will be issued during May. Wheat is particularly vulnerable from ears half emerged to the onset of flowering. Some varieties e.g. Oakley & Viscount are resistant to midge attack but many e.g. the Group 1 varieties are not. For a more accurate assessment of risk on your farm Pheromone traps are available from your local ProCam Office



Infection Of The Ear by Fusarium



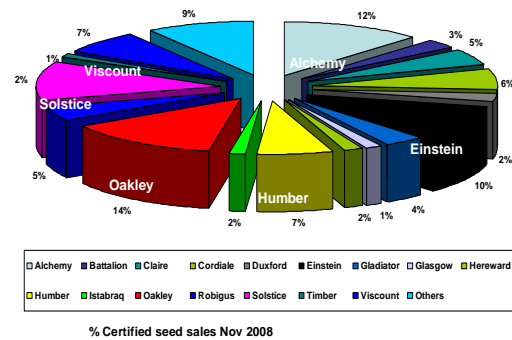
A Date for your Diary

ProCam Annual Summer Open Days

17th & 18th June 2009

An advance notice that ProCam Agriculture will be running their Annual Summer Open Days/Trials Demonstration at the Bayer Trials Facility at Great Chishill, Hertfordshire. The overall theme will be on cropping decisions for next season and will include variety selection, herbicide strategies and crop establishment with a particular focus on oilseed rape establishment and soil management. Formal invitations will be sent out later but in the meantime reserve these dates—in your ProCam diary of course!

Over 65% of winter wheat varieties are at risk of lodging



Cereals-Late Growth Regulators

As the graph to the left shows—based on certified seed sales a large proportion of the wheat crop is at risk from lodging. After a prolonged dry spell the potential lodging risk is often underestimated. A return to wetter conditions can cause a surge in growth as applied N is rapidly taken up; the taller crops with weakened stems are particularly vulnerable as the ears start to fill and gain weight. This was the case 2 years ago after an especially dry April. Assess the risk based on variety, previous cropping, fertiliser and organic manure usage rates, topography and soil type. There may well be a benefit from applying a late PGR based around ethephon e.g. Upgrade, Cerone, Terpal etc.

Beans—Bruchid Beetle

Achieving a high quality sample is key if the premium for human consumption standard is the target. Trials by PGRO in recent years have shown that bruchid beetle damage is significantly reduced if insecticides are applied following 2 consecutive days of >20°C (after pods have formed) and repeated 7-10 days later. The temperature criterion means the sprays are better timed to coincide with the arrival of the female beetle to lay eggs. It is important to prevent egg laying on the pods as there is little that can be done once the larvae have hatched. Coverage and penetration of the spray into the foliage is also very important. Your ProCam agronomist will have more details on control strategies.

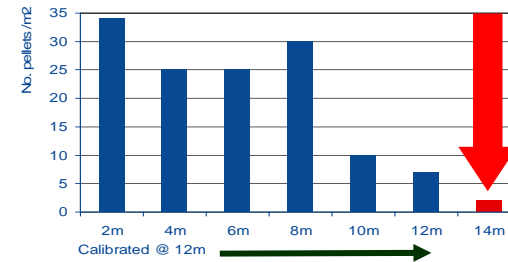


PA 4 TRAINING

As a result of high levels of Metaldehyde detection in water courses, many of you will be aware that on-farm practice with regard to slug pellet application is coming under increased scrutiny.

We are organising a number of PA4 training days to be held in June in order that operators of application equipment can receive certification in their use.

Contact Michelle at the Melbourn Office—01763 261592 for more details



The adjacent graph from work carried out by the Metaldehyde Stewardship Group shows that even well calibrated spreaders 'over spread'. 1 pellet in 10000L is enough to breach water standards. Using quality slug pellets will help to maintain a tighter spread pattern and is a significant factor in keeping pellets out of water.

Set-aside Mitigation: - Voluntary Option NFU/CLA Proposals

The NFU and CLA have published details of their voluntary scheme to offset any negative effects from the end of set-aside. This is the so-called 'Option B' under the DEFRA consultation, as opposed to DEFRA's Option A—a compulsory scheme to be enforced through cross-compliance.

Full details of the NFU/CLA plans can be found at www.nfuonline.com/x37687.xml

There is deep scepticism about DEFRA's Option A. It will be administratively burdensome, require a wastefully large area of land to be taken out of production (5-6%) and have negative effects on ELS take-up rates.

The NFU's Option B outlines more targeted measures based on three 'themes';

- Farmland Birds – with particular focus on providing over-winter feeding habitats, summer breeding sites and late winter/spring feeding opportunities
- Resource protection – specifically protecting water from diffuse pollution
- Biodiversity – although farmland birds have been the main policy focus this theme is to ensure that benefits are captured for other plant and mammal species. The main element of Option B is a 'Campaign for the Farmed Environment' (CFE).

Remember that the closing date for responses to the cross-compliance consultation as a whole is the 27th May.

It is important to have your say—try and find time at this busy time of year to register your views.