

## PRE-EMERGENCE MIXTURES ESSENTIAL

Date added: 05/10/07 Crop producers must ensure they are making full use of pre emergence herbicides this autumn as subsequent weed control could be a real challenge in many parts of the country, warns ProCam technical director Dr David Ellerton.

“This could be the year when relying on a single spray of Atlantis or other post emergence options in the autumn, is a less effective solution due to highly variable weed germination patterns,” Dr. Ellerton says.

Because it was cool and damp in June and July this year, ryegrass and blackgrass germinations are likely to be long and protracted.

This could lead to a similar autumn to 2004 when blackgrass germinated right the way into February. In addition, a run of dry weather has led to a delay in drilling and subsequent weed germination in many areas, he says

“Generally speaking, Atlantis is most effective when applied in the autumn. However, this season weeds may continue to germinate after autumn applications.

“Alternatively, if you wait until later in the spring the product may be less effective if EMR resistance is present and you also risk a reduction in yield due to weed competition over winter. With only one opportunity to apply ALS grassweed products, choosing the correct date for Atlantis application will be extremely difficult.”

Use of a robust pre emergence application can help the situation enormously as it reduces the initial weed burden as well as providing insurance against lack of an appropriate post emergence window. It also provides increased flexibility in choice and timing of subsequent post emergence herbicides, he says.

“Use of pre-emergence treatments has risen considerably in the last three years and they are proving to be useful tools in our armoury as resistance continues to rise to many of our major herbicide product groups.

“To optimise the benefit of pre-em herbicides, growers should utilise as many modes of action as possible to help increase chances of success including trifluralin, pendimethalin, flufenacet and prosulfocarb.”

In addition, revocation of IPU means that a major option for control of annual meadow grass will also be lost over the next two seasons. Low doses of pre-em products are likely to be a major component of meadow grass control strategies in the future, he adds.

“Without doubt this will be a year of yet another increase of pre-emergence programmes in a range of cereal weed control scenarios” Dr Ellerton concludes

Ends

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