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PRESS NEWS

T0 SPRAYS NOW CRITICAL AS DISEASE THREAT GROWS

Crop producers must now strive to make critical T0 fungicide applications as soon as possible or risk significant crop losses in what is shaping up to be a high disease threat year, warns ProCam technical director Dr. David Ellerton.

A relatively mild winter and lush crops resulting from high available soil nitrogens, have let Mildew, Septoria and Rusts get a significant grip. In addition new races of diseases are overcoming varietal resistance e.g. mildew in Robigus, and this situation has been compounded by unsuitable weather in March which has stopped many growers throughout the UK applying their T0 sprays.

“It’s getting urgent,” Dr. Ellerton says. “And the available window to make T0 sprays is getting very narrow.

“The obvious temptation for growers now is to miss the T0 spray, combine it with the T1 later on or just move everything forward, but each of these is fraught with problems.

“It is essential to stop these diseases getting established and growers must start their spray programmes as a matter of urgency now. The financial implications of not doing so are considerable both in terms of potential yield loss and extra spend on agrochemicals.”

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Results from analysis of farm data last year under ProCam's 4cast initiative, showed the difference between following a structured four spray schedule with applications made at the right date (T0, T1, T2 and T3) and a more reactive three spray programme was a yield benefit of 3.6 t/ha - 12.6 t/ha compared with 9.0 t/ha and a gross margin advantage of £234/ha - £819/ha as opposed to £585 t/ha.

4cast data also shows that on average every time a spray is missed from a model four spray programme, a yield loss of around 0.3t/ha results. In some cases of high disease pressure, the yield loss between a two spray and a four spray programme can be as much as 0.9 t/ha.

"The potential losses now faced by growers are very real," David Ellerton says.

"You must make that T0 spray as soon as you can, stick to a structured schedule of fungicide applications with no more than 4 weeks between applications and don't cut corners thinking you'll come out on top. If you don't get your spray schedule established now, you'll need forever higher doses of triazoles to try and retrieve the situation and could potentially never control the disease threat properly this year."

Ends.

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