

**W**elcome to the June edition of Crop Mail, a bi-monthly newsletter to keep you up to date with what's happening at Crop Care.

Crop Care continues to develop new products and practical solutions for growers to keep pace with their everchanging needs and rapidly challenging environment. There are some exciting new products and label extensions from Crop Care to add to our extensive product range and technical expertise.

### Dormex: Apples

Dormex is now registered for regulation of budburst in apples.

When applied to apples Dormex results in the following key benefits:

- More growing points
- Earlier and more uniform budbreak - higher fruit prices for early season fruit
- Uniform growth – easier crop management – less thinning sprays required
- Earlier and condensed harvest
- Build up of desired framework
- Overall yield increase
- Larger fruit

The overall benefit to growers is in achieving more profit per Ha through less need for thinning sprays, higher prices for early season fruit, higher yields and better fruit quality.

### Fruit Fly control

Amulet Cue-Lure has recently been approved for registration extension to include all fruit crops susceptible to Queensland fruit fly. The product was previously only registered in citrus, table grapes and stone fruit.

Amulet-Cue Lure is a moulded recycled paper fly station which is designed to provide an environmentally friendly alternative to high volume fruit crop cover sprays. The unique formulation delivery system for fipronil and the male fruit fly pheromone, enables growers to effectively control male fruit fly populations. Protein baiting to control females is carried out in conjunction with the Amulet Cue-Lure technology.

Crop Care is currently working on registration of an improved protein spray for female fruit fly control using novel technology which will compliment Amulet Cue-Lure.

### Spotlight Plus

Spotlight Plus is specifically, horticultural developed, use patented formulation of Cafentrazone-ethyl. It has a built in adjuvant, designed to maximise activity and reduce drift. Spotlight Plus is used as a "spike" herbicide for mixture with glyphosate, paraquat or glufosinate based knockdown herbicides, for tree line weed control.

Spotlight Plus also supersedes Hammer + Supercharge for grapevine desuckering, and is the only registered option for control. This provides an alternative to manual or mechanical control measures. Grapevine suckers provide a site for disease, compete with the productive portion of the canopy and reduce access for workers.

Spotlight Plus Features;

- Built in Surfactant – provides greater convenience and saves time with no mixing required.

- Protax Inhibitor – Spotlight Plus is a contact herbicide which has rapid uptake through the foliage and because it is not translocated there is limited movement through the phloem.
- Non-Systemic – no residual and no soil carryover.
- Non-Volatile formulation – means no potential damage to your vines from volatilization of product.
- Rainfast in 1 hour – gives greater flexibility and confidence you won't get caught out in a rainshower.
- Schedule 5 Poison – Spotlight Plus has low end user toxicity and an excellent environmental profile.



### Crop Care's post-emergent herbicide range

Crop Care's post-emergent herbicide range for the 2008 winter-crop season reflects our approach to providing innovative products that help growers to reduce their risk and to increase productivity and margins. Crop Care has responded quickly to changing Australian farming conditions by providing uniquely Australian solutions to keep pace with farmers evolving requirements.

Two new products have been developed – Factor and Affinity Force - from herbicides that have already proven successful, but providing growers with more flexibility. Crop Care continues to provide Achieve, a long term proven benchmark grass herbicide.

### factor

#### Flexibility against ryegrass

THE active ingredient in Factor (butroxydim) is widely regarded as having the best resistance profile of any Group A chemistry available for annual ryegrass control in broadleaf crops.

Factor has been developed from market-leading herbicide Fusion Super (which contains both butroxydim and fluzifop) to provide a stand-alone butroxydim product - to boost control of annual ryegrass beyond the level available from any other selective grass herbicide on the market. Registering Factor (butroxydim on its own) allows higher rates of butroxydim to be applied for better ryegrass control, and gives growers the flexibility to mix Factor with any FOP herbicide – to control the full range of annual grass weeds in winter pulse and oilseed crops and legume pastures.

Annual ryegrass resistance to FOP and/or DIM herbicides is increasing. Independent weed researchers have found that in many of these resistance situations, Factor can still achieve good control. Factor maximises the chances of controlling annual ryegrass with a Group A herbicide in broadleaf crops. It controls grass weeds very quickly, minimising competition and maximising crop yield potential.





**New liquid formulation for easier use**

Market-leading broadleaf weed herbicide Affinity has just got easier

to use, for this winter cereal season. Crop Care has produced a liquid version Affinity Force – Affinity having previously been available as a granule.

Affinity has been registered in Australia since 2000 as an early post-emergence broadleaf herbicide for winter cereals. Mixed with Thistlekillerm (MCPA), Affinity provides excellent broad-spectrum control of broadleaf weeds.

It has proven particularly effective in controlling hard-to-kill weeds such as cleavers (bedstraw), wild radish and bifora; it has also become an important tool in managing marshmallow in cropping rotations.

Affinity Force provides a unique Group G mode of action against broadleaf weeds in winter cereals, so is an excellent additional option as a rotational tool in broadleaf weed management. With a rapid uptake causing weed death in 3 to 7 days, Affinity Force is one of the fastest-acting selective broadleaf herbicides available for winter cereal crops, so ensures minimal weed competition and maximum potential yield. With excellent tolerance by all cereals and no residual soil activity, Affinity Force can be used safely in cereal/legume rotations.



**Value for money benchmark product**

THE benchmark for many years for controlling grass weeds in cereals, Achieve with a changed commercial offering this season, is now even better value for money.

Achieve is an Australian product, discovered by Australian scientists and developed for Australian cereal-growers to control a broad spectrum of grass weeds.

Achieve was the first tralkoxydim 'DIM' herbicide launched on the market. Registered for use in wheat, barley, triticale and cereal rye, Achieve has an exceptional performance history.

Achieve has reliably stamped out annual ryegrass and wild oats, and suppressed phalaris in winter cereals across Australia's major cereal-growing areas. In one hit, it shuts down growth of these major grass weeds within 48 hours, preventing their competition for precious soil moisture and nutrients. Rainfast within 30 minutes, it's also ideal for spraying in unpredictable weather.

In these uncertain conditions, it's wise to stick with a fast-acting post-emergent herbicide that you know to be safe for the crop, effective against these major weeds, and that is quickly rainfast for effective control in potentially showery winter weather.

Annual grass weeds compete heavily with young cereal plants for water and nitrogen soon after they emerge and during the important crop tillering period - so removing weeds less than 6 weeks after sowing will help to minimise yield loss.

Used early in the life of a cereal crop, Achieve increases the potential for a high yielding, profitable crop – per hectare and per unit of soil water. The preferred timing for applying Achieve is when weeds are growing actively and are at the 2 to 4-leaf stage before tillering.

Long-term Australian trials with Achieve show a massive 78% improvement in cereal crop yield by controlling annual ryegrass and a 72% yield improvement by controlling wild oats - compared with untreated crops.

**Alliance is now registered**

GROWERS facing increasing herbicide resistance in weeds such as annual ryegrass and barnyard grass now have a new solution, with the registration of Alliance from Crop Care.

Crop Care rep, Danica Leys, said that Alliance is a timely new knock-down herbicide for controlling a wide range of grass and broadleaf weeds in crop establishment, fallow and horticulture Alliance contains 250g/L of amitrole and 125g/L of paraquat, combining the triazole and bipyrindyl groups of chemistry.

Danica Leys said "Combining mode of action groups Q and L, Alliance gives a new option in managing resistant weeds. Alliance provides alternative chemistry to glyphosate, and is noticeably different from other paraquat herbicides.

"Trials have shown that Alliance controls a wide range of glyphosate-resistant ryegrass biotypes.

"Alliance kills seedlings of annual grasses and most annual broadleaf weeds. Its impact is quicker than glyphosate, and longterm weed control is usually better, resulting in fewer transplants or survivors.

"Both the amitrole and paraquat components persist for only a very short time in the soil."

Alliance is compatible with a wide range of pre-emergent herbicides for in-crop weed control.

Winter cereals, canola, pasture and summer crops can be sown immediately after application; leave at least 2 days before sowing pulse crops. Chickpeas and lentils appear sensitive to Alliance, so its use is not recommended before sowing these crops.

"Alliance provides a solution for weed control in a wide range of situations, including: establishment of winter cereals, canola, pasture and summer crops, established vineyards and orchards, fallow establishment and maintenance and non-disturbed areas on farm such as fencelines, firebreaks, tree plantings and around yards and buildings said Danica Leys.



(Above) Danica Leys



**Agriculture payments: In good times and bad, farmers get their subsidies**

**Editorial used with permission from USA TODAY (p.14): Thursday May 8, 2008**

*Our view: Powerful lobby thwarts efforts to rein in wasteful spending.*

At last count, Iowa had about 89,000 farms, and the state's farmers grow more corn and soybeans than in any other state in the nation. If any state where to feel the efforts of serious improvement in American farm policy, it would be this one.

So the other day, The Des Moines Register asked Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, how many Iowans on those 89,000 or so farms would be affected by the new limits on farm subsidies that

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Congress is considering. "Two or three," Harkin replied. In other words, business as usual for the other 99.9%. Reformers have been agitating for years to cut back on subsidies to the wealthiest farmers, who'd presumably do just fine without public assistance that costs the average U.S. household about \$320 per year in taxes and higher food prices, according to the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank.

At a time when food prices are already soaring, why should the government pay farmers roughly \$5 billion a year in subsidies (a cost that can more than double if lower crop prices trigger commodity supports?) And when deficits are causing cutbacks in other parts of the federal budget, why should Congress lock in generous farm subsidies for five more years as part of new farm legislation nearing passage?

There's no satisfactory answer except for the raw power of the farm lobby. If congress passes up this opportunity to take an axe to subsidies, it could be 2013 before reformers get another chance.

Final figures were still in flux Wednesday, but the numbers Harkin was talking about would begin to phase out subsidies for farmers with an annual income above \$950,000, or \$1.9 million per married couple.

That's better than the \$2.5 million maximum for the individual farmer now, but it's not the reasonable \$200,000 annual income limit President Bush proposed of the \$500,000 he'd reportedly settle for. And the bill would do nothing to reduce or end the \$40,000 a year in "direct payments" (\$80,000 per couple) that go to many farmers whether they plant a crop or not. Nor would the proposal limit dubious giveaways such as a \$93 million tax break for thoroughbred racehorses, or a price support program that protects U.S. sugar cane and sugar beet farmers. Bush has used a veto threat to pressure congressional negotiators on the subsidy issue, but he's up against a formidable coalition. About two-thirds of the money in the bill funds crucial nutrition programs such as food stamps and aid to food banks, which are all important at a time when food prices are rising.

Even, so, Congress and Bush shouldn't pass up this opportunity to take a machete to farm subsidies. When they're deciding what's the appropriate cutoff point for subsidies, they might just keep in mind that last year they decided that \$64,000 or less should be the income limit for families to get subsidized health care for their children under the SCHIP program.

If significant agriculture reform doesn't happen this year, "there will be other times down the road where we can address this," Harkin told the Register.

We're not holding our breath.



**Planting cane without effective grub control is a waste of time and money**

PLANTING and growing sugarcane is an expensive process when you take into account the cost of planting, fertilizer, weed control and irrigation. But all of that investment is a waste of time and money if it doesn't include an effective canegrub control program, according to Burdekin grower Robert Rossiter. The Rossiter family farm knows the impact that canegrubs have on cane farming income - after suffering losses of \$80,000 per year through lost yield, and having to replant due to grub damage.



In the mid 1990s they were faced with the heartbreak of declining production, and with no effective means of controlling cane grubs and optimising their investment in the crop. Robert Rossiter: "Back in 1994 we started to get some canegrub infestation. By 1999/2000 we had got to the point that production had declined from a peak of 59 tonnes/acre down to 45 tonnes/acre.

"It was heartbreaking. We had been increasing yields, then we struck trouble - yields started to go off, and we couldn't keep the cane in the ground.

"All the money and effort that we'd put into the crop was a waste, because we didn't have anything effective to use on plant cane to protect the crop from canegrub damage.

"Along with other farmers, we took part in canegrub control trials. We started using suSCon Maxi under permit on our plant cane - and have been using it on plant cane every year since.

"It's made so much difference to our crop yield and income, I can't understand why anyone would leave it out of their planting program.

"Our Killie Road area has become a canegrub hot spot, so without an effective control program you're wasting your time planting cane.

"We're now back up to 55 tonnes/acre since we have been able to use suSCon Maxi in our plant cane - which we have found protects the crop during the plant year, first ratoon and maybe some benefit in the second ratoon.

"While more expensive per application, suSCon Maxi granules have provided us with a reliable, lasting way to insure our crop against yield loss or a replant due to grubs."

A major issue for growers in areas with severe canegrub problems - such as the good river loam soils of the Burdekin - is the infestation threat from properties without an effective grub control program.

Canegrub beetles hatch from breeding areas under cane and fly through the area, putting pressure on all neighbouring cane crops.

Cane beetles remind farmers of their threat to cane crops as they fly through the district from October to January.

The Rossiter family has an assigned area of 170 acres of sugarcane, and a reliable water supply.

However, the likely better prices this coming season will be offset by expected lower yields, due to harvesting delays last season. The crop was cut too late for ratoons to get away.

Robert Rossiter: "That's put the crop one and a half months behind, so yields will be impacted - but not as badly as the impact of uncontrolled canegrubs."

