



Media Release

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Tackling resistant annual ryegrass in broadleaf winter crops

DON'T let resistant annual ryegrass and other grass weeds spoil your chances of a good oilseed or pulse crop, planted on the back of recent autumn rains.

Over much of Australia's broadacre cropping regions, rain in late April/early May after a long dry spell has spurred crop planting – but has also prompted an early germination of a well-stocked winter-weed seedbank, including resistant annual ryegrass strains.

Crop Care marketing manager Sharon Dew: "This autumn break gives growers one of the best opportunities they've had in a long while for a good early kill of problem grass weeds, and to combat herbicide resistance.

"Since the 1980s annual ryegrass, a major weed of oilseed, pulse and cereal crops, has developed increasing levels of resistance to the two chemical members of Group A herbicides used in its control – FOPs and DIMs. But the problem is manageable."

The development of resistance is not down to any one factor, but to a range of developments and changes in farming practice. No-till systems for example are particularly susceptible to herbicide resistance due to their heavy reliance on herbicides for fallow weed control.

Using a product until it completely fails also results in a serious build up of seed numbers – putting the next control option under extreme pressure. So it's important not to exhaust the usefulness of one product by repeat applications before switching to the next.

Sharon Dew: "The key to combating resistance development is to use the most powerful weapon to control the maximum number of weeds each time; to rotate the weapons to inhibit loss of sensitivity from repeated applications; to combine several methods to 'confuse' resistant ryegrass; and to tackle the problem every year to reduce seed numbers."

Making the decision to plant a higher-value oilseed or pulse crop this winter makes annual ryegrass control even more important. Ryegrass seed is very difficult to grade out of canola at harvest, and crops such as lupins and linseed don't compete well with grass weeds - their yield will suffer severely if weeds are not controlled early in crop growth. Also, if these crops are being grown as a planned rotation with cereals, they need to be grass-weed free to control soil-borne cereal diseases such as take-all.

Sharon Dew: "For all of these reasons, it's essential that control of ryegrass and other grass weeds is first-class. There is now a single product that will control all of the major annual winter grass weeds in canola, chickpeas, faba beans, field peas, linseed, lupins, lentils, vetch, white clover, subterranean clover, snail medic and barrel medic.

"Trial results have shown that Fusion Super® achieves good annual ryegrass control in situations where there is resistance to both FOP and some DIM group herbicides - plus control of other important grass weeds. It combines the proven effectiveness of the DIM chemical butoxydim against annual ryegrass, and the strength of the FOP partner fluazifop against brome grass, volunteer cereals, barley grass and wild oats.

“The granulated product was particularly developed by Crop Care to improve the control of annual ryegrass - including some herbicide-resistant strains. Its ‘parent’ Fusion WG ® already provided very good control of other annual grasses in winter broadleaf crops and pastures.

“With its unique combined DIM/FOP formulation, Fusion Super has a better chance of providing ryegrass control where other products fail. The DIM active ingredient in Fusion Super (butoxydim) appears to be the pick of DIM chemistry on resistant annual ryegrass.

“In weed-resistance management terms, Fusion Super is classed as a GroupA herbicide. Fusion Super will not avoid the development of resistance, nor will it bring on resistance more quickly than other grass herbicides – but it will maximise your Group A chances of getting on top of grass weeds in broadleaf crops, as part of a well-planned weed control program.”

In Trials in WA, SA and NSW, Fusion Super at 320g/ha provided more than 110% increase in grain yield of lupins and field peas (the largest increase in grain yield of all major selective grass herbicides) compared with plots left untreated for annual ryegrass.

The maximum rate for Fusion Super on canola is 210g/ha (it is sensitive to higher amounts), and should not be applied before 80% of canola plants are at the true 4-leaf stage (5th leaf emerging). For all other registered crops, Fusion Super can be applied once crop plants have reached the true 2-leaf (3rd leaf emerging) stage.

Take care that spraying is carried out before soil moisture is depleted and the crop and weeds become stressed, and avoid double overlap in spraying. Remove weeds from crops as quickly as practical - within 6 weeks of planting - to minimise yield loss due to competition for water and nutrients. Spray as early as practical while the majority of weeds have germinated and are still small (2-leaf to early tillering).

Product Information

Fusion Super ® was exclusively developed for Australian conditions from leading herbicide Fusion WG ® to improve control of hard-to-kill annual ryegrass – combining the strengths and eliminating the weaknesses of both FOP and DIM chemical groups.

Registered in June 2005, the granulated formula disperses easily in a half-filled spray tank, with agitation engaged. Easy to use, pre-measured packs, allows easy mixing of just the right amount, and reduces the volume of chemicals being stored and carted on the farm.

Fusion Super is rainfast within 1 hour – a handy feature when spraying in rainy winter weather.

Recommended adjuvants are Supercharge and D-C-Trate – however Supercharge is likely to give more reliable results, especially in brome grass control.

Fusion Super can be tank-mixed according to Crop Care advice with a range of insecticides, fungicides and trace elements.

Fusion Super ® – for fast, robust post-emergent control of difficult-to-kill annual ryegrass (including some resistant strains), plus a broad spectrum of grass weeds including wild oats, volunteer cereals, barley grass, brome grass and phalaris in canola, chickpeas, faba beans, field peas, linseed, lupins, lentils, vetch, white clover, subterranean clover, snail medic and barrel medic.

Brought to Australian crop growers by Crop Care.

As always, read the label carefully and follow advice on application rates, spraying equipment, timing and the best conditions for spraying. Follow chemical handling and spray instructions carefully. Check the different rates and times for different purposes and situations.

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