

**October 1, 2007**

### **Longer grub control from one planting treatment is good economics**

AT today's low cane prices, it makes very good sense to protect the precious plant cane crop and as many ratoons as possible from cane grub attack – and to use the minimum number of applications.

On a farm that is historically prone to cane grub damage, Gordonvale cane grower Jim Hesp has always tried to keep at the forefront of grub control with the latest, most effective products.

“Our home property has had grub control problems since well before my father purchased it, so even when cane prices are low, we still have to spend what it takes to keep on top of cane grubs.

“Effective residual control of cane grubs has been uncertain until suSCon Maxi was developed by the company and BSES.

“It seems to be working well. On our home farm we certainly get 2 year's control.

“So we apply suSCon Maxi to plant cane at fill stage, then use the other easily-applied liquid products on third and fourth ratoons to top up as needed, after checking fields at harvest.

“We believe it is economical to apply suSCon Maxi to plant cane and get 2 year's control (and save on application costs), compared with one year's control from other products.”

Stan Marsh, proprietor of distributors S & NI Marsh, Gordonvale, north Queensland also believes it's good economics to use a cane grub treatment that gives the longest control from one application.

“Planting is the biggest expense in the cane crop cycle, so the more productive ratoons you can economically get, the lower the planting costs /ha/year. Over years of low cane prices growers have tended to reduce each year's planting and to increase the number of ratoons – some up to 10/11 years.

“Unfortunately, those older ratoons have become breeding grounds for cane grubs. Cane grubs were very bad in our district until the first liquid control Confidor® became available.

“The more recent introduction of suSCon Maxi has been a great advance, providing a longer period of control from one application, and being easy to use.”

suSCon Maxi is currently the cheapest product to use, per year of control, being the only product registered for 2-year control of greyback cangrubs.

Mr Marsh said that each form of control had its place – suSCon Maxi for controlling grubs in plant cane and early ratoons, and liquid controls like Senator® and Confidor for one-year control on older ratoons.

Trials conducted at Gordonvale by Crop Care and BSES from 2002-2005 found that with no grubs in plant cane, light infestations in the first ratoon, and moderate grub levels in the second ratoon, cane yields over a 3-year crop cycle increased by 3.9 tonnes/ha from a single planting treatment of 15 kg/ha of suSCon Maxi; versus a single treatment with Confidor which increased yields by 3.1 tonnes/ha.

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With moderate grub infestation in 2 out of 3 of the early crop years, a single planting application of 15kg/ha of suSCon Maxi increased cane yield over a 3-year crop cycle by 7.4 tonnes/ha compared with 4.6 tonnes/ha yield improvement from a single planting application of Confidor.

Growers in southern Queensland cane-growing areas are anticipating similar substantial increases in cane yield and greater economic returns, with a pending application for registration of suSCon Maxi for 3-year control of Childers and *Negatoria* cane grubs. Registration is expected early in the 2008 season.

- ® Confidor is a registered trademark of Bayer CropScience.
- ® Senator and suSCon are registered trademarks of Crop Care Australasia.

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