

SPRING HORTICULTURE & VITICULTURE

27 July 2011

INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR SPRING

FOR spring 2011, Crop Care continues its delivery of innovative solutions for Australia's important horticulture and viticulture sector.

Crop Care national horticulture business manager Kerrie Mackay said that through a process of Australian field trials and registration, the company contributes to the ongoing viability of both industries by bringing new, effective products and alternative chemistry to the market.

"Crop Care has registered products ready to help resolve three major springtime management issues in Australia's vineyards and orchards."

Spotlight Plus for Desuckering & Weed Control

"This spring, growers of grapevines, tree fruit, olives and tree nuts have a registered product for chemical desuckering, to replace the costly, labour-intensive task of manually removing unproductive suckers.

"Spotlight Plus herbicide – which has already proved itself as an effective 'spike' for enhancing the control of difficult-to-control broadleaf weeds such as small-flowered mallow – is also the only product registered for removing suckers in orchards, olive groves and grapevines."

Suckers are a particularly major issue for winegrape, olive and prune growers. In Australian trials, Spotlight Plus has provided rapid and thorough control of suckers in all of these situations.

Manual desuckering of grapevines is estimated to cost the wine industry around \$60 million annually.

Ms Mackay: "This could be reduced to one-third of that cost with effective use of Spotlight Plus. Similar savings might be expected in other enterprises where sucker removal is a major component of annual labour costs.

"Spotlight Plus has an inbuilt adjuvant to maximise activity and reduce potential damage to productive foliage and fruit in vines and trees, and does not move systemically through the plant, so there are no residues in harvested fruit.

"Growers can now consider doing two important springtime tasks with one pass, setting up their spray unit with two tanks – one of Spotlight Plus directed at suckers, and the other of a Spotlight Plus-spiked herbicide tank mix for tree or vine-line spraying of important weeds."



Effective, lower cost chemical desuckering could save the Australian winegrape industry \$millions annually.



Rootstock sucker desiccation in plum tree nursery stock, 10 days after chemical treatment.

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Managing Herbicide Resistance in Orchards & Vineyards



Good control of glyphosate-resistant ryegrass provided by Alliance (4L/ha) followed by an application of Stomp 440 (9L/ha) plus Shirquat (2L/ha).

Glyphosate-resistant weeds, especially annual ryegrass, are on the rise in Australian orchards and vineyards, with 17 cases so far registered in SA and WA vineyards, and 4 cases in NSW orchards.

All of these cases of confirmed glyphosate-resistance there are three common factors – intensive, year to year use of glyphosate (Group M), with lack of rotation with other herbicide modes of action, and a lack of other non-herbicide management practices.

Ms Mackay said that in response to this growing problem, Crop Care had investigated herbicide options for glyphosate-resistant annual ryegrass.

“At a Barossa Valley site with a high incidence of resistance, effective control of glyphosate-resistant annual ryegrass was obtained with Alliance (Group L&Q), and with a combination of Shirquat (Group L) plus Stomp (Group D).

“Stomp provided effective pre-emergent control of resistant ryegrass, with continued control for 3 to 4 months after application.

“Alliance also provided good control of other key vineyard weeds such as capeweed, prickly lettuce, sowthistle and medic.”

Managing Fungicide-Resistant Powdery Mildew

Heavy rainfall in late 2010 and well into 2011 led to widespread and damaging outbreaks of fungal diseases across many of Australia’s horticulture and winegrowing regions.

Compounded by the loss of efficacy of some registered systemic fungicides under the heavy disease pressure, the impact was devastating.

Ms Mackay said that with the potential for fungal diseases to over-winter there was also potential for a major impact on this next crop.

“Powdery mildew is high on the major disease control list for both cucurbit and grapegrowers. However the development of strobilurin-resistant strains of powdery mildew has growers desperate for alternative chemistry to include in their regular spray programs.

“This year, Crop Care has registered Vivando, based on a totally new active ingredient, metrafenone (Group U8) – the first fungicide to be commercialised from this novel class of chemistry.

“Extensive trials with Vivando as part of a protective spray program, alternating different chemical groups, has shown it to be a very effective addition for preventing powdery mildew in Australian cucurbit crops and grapevines.”



Field trials during the recent north Queensland and southern Victorian growing seasons confirmed the effectiveness of Vivando in combating powdery mildew in cucurbits. Vivando has also proved a very effective protectant against the disease in grapevines.

For More Information:

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