



What's Happening around the Fields:

Frost galore! Winter has decided to come late with frosts occurring around most of the region. Due to the severity of the current frosts a majority of crops have been left flat and stressed. Most crops have their secondary roots developed by now or are developing them into reasonable moisture. With this in mind spraying in these conditions should be approached with caution. To minimise crop injury, it is strongly advised to delay your spraying regime until later in the crop cycle, after the frosty periods. If you have any doubts please do not hesitate to contact your local Pursehouse Rural Agronomist.

Mice are also still prevalent in many crops and should be checked weekly in high risk situations. Even though we have had some harsh weather their numbers are still high. It has been noticed that mice are still chewing wheat crops off at the joints and grazing on chickpea plants. If you are noticing damage in your crops contact your local Pursehouse Rural Agronomist to assess the situation and decide whether baiting is a viable option.

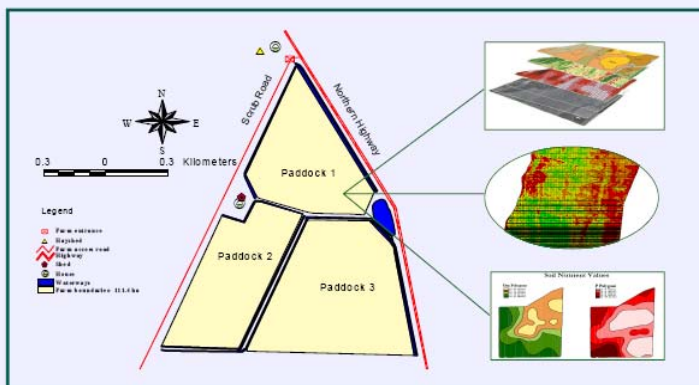
Fertiliser is still on the mind of many farmers. Current fertiliser prices are soaring; this year's summer crop is coming up fast; and coupled with volatile commodity prices getting it right in your soil is critical. Soil testing is a good way to check the shape of your soil. With Nitrogen costing more and more, split applications might be an option for you to save on the large initial capital outlay. This may allow you to see how the season will evolve. If you are having problems deciding on what fertiliser program suits you contact your local Pursehouse Rural agronomist to devise a fertiliser program that is tailored to your crops needs.

Watch For Cereal and Pulse Crop Diseases

At last some warmer day temperatures have arrived and we are seeing some good growth in wheat, barley and chickpea crops. With the warmer weather and the forecasted rainfall predicted, growers need to be aware that foliar leaf and stem diseases can rapidly establish and spread under these conditions. Some isolated cases of yellow spot have appeared in wheat crops at low infection levels. This will need to be monitored as crop growth continues. Monitoring will ensure that the disease does not move into the upper part of the plant as it approaches flag leaf. There have been no verified reports of cereal rust diseases on the inner Downs at this stage, but again complacency should not replace good crop management. The same philosophy should apply to managing the risk associated with chickpea diseases. The increased resistance available in some varieties does not mean that fungicide strategies should not be in place to alleviate any outbreak of disease that may occur. Please talk to your local PHR agronomist if you would like to discuss management strategies relating to disease control in your winter crops.

Farm and Field Mapping

Do you know how many hectares are in your paddocks?
Have you recently changed your field boundaries or pulled out fence lines?
Do you know exactly how much chemical you require and not simply an estimate?



Specialising in:

- Whole farm maps
- Field Maps
- Yield Maps
- Soil variability
- Plant mapping
- Wall maps
- GPS Referencing
- Environmental Planning
- Elevation maps
- Variable Rate application

Spring planting? How early is too early?

With the recent light showers and odd storm around and the forecast for good falls in the next few days (4/5 Sept), we may have the option for an early start to the summer cropping season. Following is a summary of recent trial work conducted by Pacific seeds on the cold start tolerance sunflowers, corn and sorghum.

While we know there are distinct differences in these crops ability to tolerate a cool start, there appear to be definite varietal differences within these crops, particularly with sorghum. MR-Striker was a standout for both germination and vigor. MR-Buster surprised trial results showing some characteristic purpling which did not affect growth. While this is only one trial, the data has suggested that average air temps of 14 degrees and rising are adequate for these varieties.

As we know corn has even better cool start characteristics and will germinate when the soil temperature reaches 12 degrees at 9.00am at a depth of 10cm for at least 3-4 consecutive days. However, one important point to remember is that at 12 degrees corn will take up to 2 weeks to emerge and being in the soil for that long can have a greater risk of soil insect attack. As far as frost risk for corn, it can tolerate light frost for the first few weeks, while the growing point is below ground level. This is generally about the 6-8 leaf stage.

Sunflowers are safer again and can be planted at soil temps of 10-12 degrees, provided they are on the rise, and are again tolerant of light frosts in the early stages. For spring plantings monounsaturated sunflowers are preferred, as high temps during seed fill have a relatively small effect on oleic acid content.

For more information please contact your Pursehouse rural agronomist.

Source: Cold start options 08, A Pacific Seeds publication.

Timing of Fungicides in Cereals

Timing of Fungicides in Wheat

It has been discovered that the ideal time for foliar application of fungicides in cereals is from the start of stem elongation to ear emergence. During this period we see the emergence of the 4 most important leaves in the crop. The optimum time for spraying a fungicide is generally at full leaf emergence. This way we can guarantee full protection of the leaf. Cereal foliar fungicides are essentially an insurance policy as to prevent the onset of disease.

Fungicide Strategies for the control of Strip Rust

The first thing to consider when looking at applying any fungicide is the particular varieties resistance. For more stripe rust susceptible varieties it is important to monitor from GS32 and GS33 and consider an application if rust is being reported in the area. If you have treated the seed with Jockey you may get protection up to GS39. Target the main spray at GS39.

Single Application Approach in Wheat

A fungicide application when the flag leaf is fully emerged on the main stem is deemed optimum. When dealing with large areas it is best to start application at GS37 when the flag leaf is starting to emerge and finish at GS39. With the one spray approach it is best to target the most susceptible varieties first.

Two Spray Application Approach in Wheat

Given the right conditions (mild moist conditions) stripe rust is likely to appear early in susceptible varieties. In this situation 2 applications of fungicides will be required (assuming no treatments were applied at planting).

In this traditional two spray situation, the first spray is used to protect leaf 3 (GS32). The overlap between the 2 sprays protects leaf 2. The second application is generally applied at GS39. The risk with this method of stripe rust control is that if the disease pressure is high and the flag leaf spray is delayed, then leaf 2 is left unprotected.



There have been sightings of rust in New South Wales already this season, so be on the look out and speak to your Pursehouse Rural agronomist regarding strategies for control. We are trying to prevent what you see on the left.

Zadoks decimal growth scale is based on ten cereal growth stages.

These are:

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| 0 germination; | 5 ear emergence; |
| 1 seedling growth (leaves on main stem); | 6 flowering; |
| 2 tillering; | 7 milk development; |
| 3 stem elongation (nodes); | 8 dough development; |
| 4 booting; | 9 ripening. |

Each primary growth stage is then sub-divided into 10 secondary stages extending the scale from 00 to 99. So Z, 15, 22, 31 indicates a plant with 5 leaves on the main stem, two tillers and one node on the main stem.