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Pearson's Grain and Transport

Swan Hill Stockfeeds

Agronomy News April-May 2018

In this issue:

Mice are still a threat

Night time surveys are showing there are still high mouse numbers in unbaited paddocks, especially on sandrises. Do monitor the same paddock on different nights, as weather conditions can influence the behaviour of the mice.

Tips to remember:

Bait 8 weeks prior to planting, and again a day prior to, or after sowing

Zinc phosphide is pungent, so it is less attractive to mice than the seed we plant

Action threshold for baiting is one mouse per 50 square metres

Bait applied at 1kg/ha delivers 125 bait points per 50 square metres and costs $6/ha

An adult mouse is capable of eating the equivalent of weight of 75 grains/ seeds per day.

Courtesy CSIRO

Deep N testing

We are still able to do deep N testing for cereals and canola, and have the information back well in time for topdressing decisions

Given the run of dry weather, mineralised N has not changed since the New Year.

Vetch- what are our options with it?

If there is an upside to the current dry conditions, it is the trade and consumption of old stock vetch hay. This demand comes from northern sheep and beef producers, as well as southern dairy farms. Vetch is easy to sell at times such as this as its high digestibility and crude protein level make it worthwhile buying and trucking it compared to cereal hay.

Brown manure will be a popular option, especially in paddocks that were cereal in 2016 and 2017

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Getting the best out of trifluralin

Dry sowing- trifluralin (and triallate) have an initial gaseous phase. The air space in dry soil increases incorporation and contact to weed seeds. Best results with trifluralin + triallate on brome and wild oats is with dry sowing.

Trifluralin does not break down in dry soil, so long as it is incorporated- you will not lose activity by dry sowing.

Water rates- higher water rates of 80-100 helps increase contact with the soil in stubble situations.

Burn stubbles- stubble laying flat (such as barley) will intercept more trifluralin than vertical stubble. Also stubble ash does not bind trifluralin, as once thought. Windrow burning is very good as it removes the flat straw that absorbs trifluralin, and where there are more grass seeds

Trifluralin is stable when mixed up in a sprayer for a number of days.

Weather Outlook

BOM Climate models- the SOI on 12/4 was +12.4, and the rolling 90 day average SOI is +6.5, which is a neutral to slightly positive situation

BOM Seasonal Outlook- 50% chance of exceeding median rainfall May to July

AccuWeather – here is the outlook for Swan Hill via "AccuWeather" (USA). Check out their website.

20/5 Rain 28mm	21/5 Periods of rain 9mm	25/5 Rain 19mm

Should these guys be right, it will be a very good start in quantity, if not two weeks late!

Wheat

The last rain event in the HRW area of the US was a let-down, and Kansas wheat rose by 6.5c to 495/bu. This was a very significant setback to the winter crop, and a delay in spring plantings.

In the background, world wheat stocks are at an all new record of 271 MT (USDA, 10/4).

France, Germany and the Black Sea area are in good shape entering late spring.

Not surprisingly, Malcolm Bartholomeus commented "it will take a big pull back in global production to deliver export parity as strong as the current forward prices"

Our job now is to get a wheat crop in the ground without a threat from mice, and manage our nitrogen as the season progresses.

Barley matters

Spartacus CL is now fully accredited as a Malt variety, as is gaining recognition in the export market.

Spartacus with its low early vigour suffers from lack of weed competitiveness, Consider adding a low rate of metribuzin (130-150g/ha) to the trifluralin to help take out early competition from brome

Interestingly, RGT Planet has passed Stage 1 of the MBIBTC, with a projected final decision in March 2019.

Clearfield Wharley- Delayed sowing vs. Wharley? Who is to know the spread between MALT and F1 in November?

When barley prices are at Decile 5, historically the spread between MALT and F1 is around $30/t. The per hectare income drop at 2.5t/ha would be $75/ha.

The equivalent in yield loss from delayed sowing would have to be 300kg/ha (1.8 bags/ac) at $250/t. A 12% yield loss would relate to around 14 days delayed planting, eg. June 14-21 time of sowing. We would expect only a 4%, or 100kg/ha yield reduction with a June 7 planting date (-$25/ha).

Being an early maturity variety, Spartacus holds its yield potential over a wide sowing window. A two week delay in planting only delays flowering by 5 days, because it responds strongly to daylength.

There is a strong case to delay planting to June 7 and control Clearfield wheat volunteers. If the feed market stays strong internationally and domestically, bag the Wharley and it may trade at similar levels to malt.

Other considerations: disc chaining or prickle chaining dry to bury more seed to encourage a germination. We also find that Kord on Kord works quite well, due to reasonable yellow leaf spot resistance, but be aware of the higher nitrogen demand and overall farm harvest congestion and frost risk profile.

Foliar multi-Trace element

By end of May we should have a shipment of bulk multi trace element foliar fertiliser.

It will cover all bases: deep sands (zinc and copper), limestone flats (manganese and zinc). There will be a hint of molybdenum for good measure.

It will be a super high load product, so 1.13L/ha will deliver the same level of zinc as 2.0L/ha Select ZMC.

Shop 50332880 Doug 0418 527849 Brett 0483 324591 Matt 0400 925776

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Lentil market

The US will lower this years' lentil plantings down by 28% to 320,000 ha (StatPub), and Canada down 27% to 1.3m ha. Now changes in production have much more bearing on commodity than demand (which remains relatively constant). This is very positive for us as lentil producers as they harvest before us, and the market signals help us make marketing decisions as we harvest pulses.

The other big thing in our favour is ***Quality***. We generally have dry harvests, whereas India and Canada do not.

Chickpeas- an interesting fact is the most recent Indian tariff increase applies only to *desi* chickpeas. Kabuli types such as Genesis 090 and Monarch where not included. Local current bids have Kabulis trading around + $300 over desis.

"It is important to remember that the prevailing price of a commodity at seeding time rarely corresponds to the eventual harvest price. If we are changing paddock plans based on current price trends, we must be prepared to take some form of forward cover"

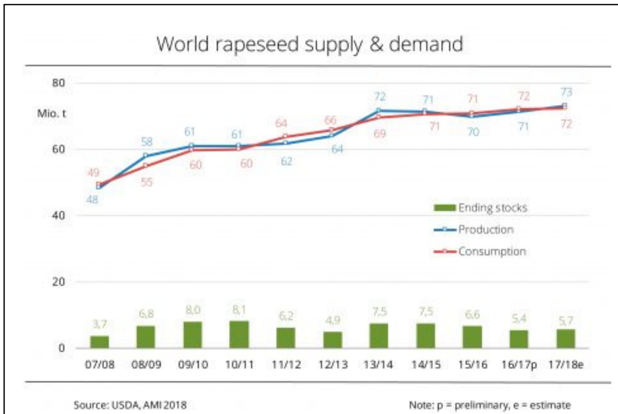
Canola market stable

The canola market moved sideways since January due to the lingering bigger Ukraine/FSU rapeseed harvest last year.

Currently the European canola is coming out of winter dormancy and bolting/flowering- so much to play out here yet.

Crude oil has peaked to a 3 year high , and Winnepeg canola has immediately rallied by +$8

In the longer term, the outlook for canola is good. The EU will no longer import palm oil for biofuel production as an environmental stance. We suspect canola/rapeseed, as well as "non-food crop" plant oils will be the replacement.



World rapeseed production is level tracking with demand, but China is increasingly importing more of its requirements. Last year its demand increased by one million tonnes.

Canola for the Mallee this year-

Clearfield canola certainly has a place where there was not enough rainfall to break down IMIs for legumes, or where there is too much rhizoctonia for barley, even with a seed treatment.

Canola following fallow, green manure or legume stubble creates the perfect brome grass double hit.

We have limited stocks remaining of ***43Y92*** and ***44Y90***, so be quick.