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OILSEEDS NEWS

WORLD FIRST RLEM RESISTANCE DISCOVERED IN WA

New approaches are needed to control the devastating insect pest, red legged earthmite, following the world-first detection of insecticide-resistant populations in Western Australia.



RESISTANT: New approaches are now needed to manage red legged earthmite.
PHOTO COURTESY CESAR.

And scientists believe that the problem may be far more widespread.

Dr Paul Umina of the Centre for Environmental Stress and Adaptation said that extremely high levels of resistance to chemicals known as synthetic pyrethroids (SPs) were detected in the Esperance

region, but it's quite probable that the problem exists elsewhere in Australia.

He said that in one case, four applications of SP insecticides failed to control red legged earthmites in a canola crop, causing considerable yield loss.

“We need to monitor this development closely and reconsider standard industry practices for controlling red legged earthmite.

Chemicals have been used as the main method for controlling this pest for more than 50 years, so it’s perhaps surprising that we haven’t encountered resistant red legged earthmite before now.”

The increased usage and reliance on low cost insecticides has accelerated the selection pressure placed on pest populations.

“There is a real need for integrated pest management strategies, but this requires careful monitoring and further research to better understand non-chemical control, including the role of natural biological control agents,” Dr Umina said.

The detection was made possible through the State collaborative networks established under the National Invertebrate Pest Initiative, supported by the Grains Research and Development Corporation.

‘BETTER CANOLA’ TRIALS AND DEMOS

Canola agronomy will be put under the spotlight in four States this year as part of the three-year National Oilseed Agronomy Project, titled “Better Canola”.

The project, which represents the biggest-ever investment into oilseed agronomy extension in Australia will fund canola, soybean and sunflower trials and demonstrations to overcome some of the barriers to growing oilseed crops.



BETTER CANOLA: Canola management will be tested in four states as part of a three-year project.

In Victoria, the focus for this year will be growing canola hay compared with grain as a means of reducing the risk of growing canola at trials at Longerenong College in the Wimmera and at Elmore, in north central Victoria.

In New South Wales, sulphur applications, row spacings, plant densities and varieties will be compared for their effects on yield and quality of canola in two trials at Junee.

Management of the disease, sclerotinia, will be the issue for Western Australia. In South Australia, yield of hybrids compared to equivalent open-pollinated cultivars, sowing rates, seed quality and nitrogen management will be studied at three sites.

The research is funded by the Grains Research and Development Corporation and the Australian Oilseeds Federation.

For further information or media enquiries, contact Steve Marcroft: (03) 5381 2294 or 0409 978 941.

ALL IN THE TIMING FOR TOFU-QUALITY SOYS

Soybeans which are moisture-stressed in the final stages of grain ripening are more likely to make poor quality “sloppy” tofu, according to new research.



BETTER TOFU: A late irrigation of soybeans leads to better tofu quality. PHOTO COURTESY CSIRO.

At last week's 14th Australian soybean conference in Bundaberg, CSIRO soybean breeder Andrew James said that getting the timing right of the last irrigation of soybeans was crucial for producing grain which makes high-quality tofu.

“Moisture stress late in the season often results in small grain – even if the variety has the potential for large grain, and results in poor quality tofu. Bigger grain tends to make better tofu,” he said

He said that moisture-stress in the final stages of pod ripening will reduce the level of a certain protein in the grain which helps tofu gel together.

Dr James said that the protein, known as “11S globulin” forms within the grain in the later stages of ripening, about four or five weeks after flowering. If the crop is stressed by dry conditions at this stage, the grain is often smaller and contains less of the desired protein. The final product is sloppy tofu.

CANOLA LEGEND CALLS IT A DAY

A pioneer of the canola industry in Australia has farewelled colleagues, growers and other work associates as he embarked on a new future after working in agriculture for 37 years, following his retirement as Seed Manager with NuSeed, based in Horsham.

Denis Ballinger's retirement function at the Horsham Golf Club last week was attended by around 60 people who spoke warmly of the invaluable contribution he had made to develop the industry since the early 1990s.



CANOLA PIONEER: Denis Ballinger.

Denis spoke of his facilitation of 37 farming groups, known as Canolacheck, across Victoria in the early 1990s, which allowed the canola industry grow from minor importance to the valuable commodity it is today.

Rob Wilson, chairman of the Canola Association of Australia, sent a message to Denis on behalf of the canola industry.

“Denis has been involved in the canola industry for well over 20 years. One of his first (if not first) canola projects as a pathologist with the then Department of Agriculture Victoria was his work on blackleg control using ‘Impact in Furrow’ where he conducted trial work at Horsham and Struan with Phil Salisbury and Trent Potter.

“Denis originally was working as a wheat pathologist with the Department and moved onto canola in the early 1980s, where he authored or co-authored several papers and Agnotes on *Leptosphaeria maculans* - the fungus causing blackleg.

“In the early 1990s he was also a key person in the highly successful Canolacheck program. He continued working with the Victorian Department of Agriculture until late 1997 when he accepted a position with Dovuro as Production Agronomist based at Horsham, where he has been till now, although in recent times with NuSeed, since Nufarm purchased Dovuro.

“Denis has been an active member of the CAA for almost 25 years, as well as involvement with the Australian Oilseeds Federation (AOF). His willingness to be involved and keenness to pass on knowledge has Denis highly regarded by his peers.

“And his dry sense of humour allowed him the ability to avert the odd sensitive situation.

Mr Wilson said that Denis’ input and service to the canola industry has been outstanding, one that he should look back on with pride.

“You will certainly be missed within and by the industry, and I sincerely on behalf of the Canola Association wish you a happy, healthy and a long retirement with your family,” he said.
