

## Week 13 – stripe rust

28 September

The West Australian strain of stripe rust was first detected in Victoria in 2003. As no wheat varieties have full resistance to the strain, a stripe rust management plan has since been crucial. Variety choice, seed treatments, the timing of the disease appearing and fungicide sprays play an important role.

Stripe rust has been found this season in many parts of the Wimmera and Mallee, and depending on the growth stage of the crop, yield loss from the disease can be quite high.

This week, BCG asked Wimmera and Mallee farmers the following questions:

- 1. Did you protect your wheat from stripe rust with a fungicide at sowing? If not, why not?**
- 2. What will trigger your decision to apply a fungicide during the growing season?**



### Rodney Hotker - Minyip

Rodney and Mette Hotker and their children, Hannah and Leah, farm 14km northeast of Minyip. Their soils range from self-mulching grey clays to red clay/loam rises. Twenty percent of their farm is sown to wheat, 36 percent to barley, 20 percent to lentils, 18 percent to chickpeas and 6 percent is chemical fallow.

**1:** “We did not treat wheat seed/fertiliser for stripe rust at sowing, mainly because with a relatively small area of wheat we thought we would be able to treat the rust in a timely and cost effective way with the boomspray. This also avoided having to commit to fungicide costs before knowing the timing and severity of any outbreaks and also see how the season was panning out after a dry start.”

**2:** “As part of our decision not to treat at sowing time, our strategy to manage rust was to treat early with a low rate of fungicide. Stripe rust was detected in dry-sown Annuello wheat and spayed on 26 August, and that application was very effective.”



### Clinton Olive - Yeungroon

Clinton Olive operates a mixed farm of 1850ha with his wife, Carolyn, and parents, Bevan and Marjorie, at Yeungroon, south of Charlton. Their soils are mixed, with stony red rises and hill country, red loams, hard-setting red clays and a small amount of black ground. Thirty percent of their farm is sown to wheat, 20 percent to barley, 20 percent to hay and fodder crops, 25 percent to pasture and the remaining ground to oats and lupins.

**1:** “We had been affected by rust the previous two seasons and with the summer rains, felt there was a good chance of more in 2005.

At sowing, we applied 200ml of Impact to about half our wheat. We thought that having some crop protected would spread our risk if we had an early outbreak. With the varieties we are growing we hoped that the treated paddocks would get through without an additional foliar treatment.

So far, the treated paddocks are showing no sign of rust, while untreated paddocks are showing traces.”

**2:** “It is dry, our growing season rainfall (150mm up until last week) is less than the same time last year, and we would like to avoid another expense. So we will monitor our crops closely and spray only if we start to see hot spots developing before head emergence. In the past two seasons we have found spraying any later has little benefit.”