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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Post emergence brome grass control

With the recent rains and early sowing programs, the challenge of controlling weeds in-crop is on again for farmers. One of the most difficult of these weeds to control is brome grass. Brome grass is a highly competitive weed which is difficult to control in cereal crops not only because it is a grass species, but also because of its staggered emergence pattern. Brome grass is an alternate host for many cereal diseases and is also a prolific seed producer which quickly establishes a large, long-lived seed-bank. Consequently there is an on-going need to control this weed. So how do farmers tackle brome grass post emergence in cereal crops?

If brome grass has emerged in a wheat crop there are a few selective control options post emergence. To control brome species (great brome or rigid brome) at the early post emergence stage in a wheat crop, Crusader (pyroxsulam—Group B) is probably the best option (excluding durum). This is because it is registered for the control of both commonly occurring brome species at densities less than 150 plants/m². Crusader can be applied from 3 leaf to 1st node of the crop to brome grass at 1 to 3 leaf stage. Other products such as Monza (sulfosulfuron—Group B) and Atlantis (mesosulfuron-methyl—Group B) can also be used on brome grass in wheat however these products are registered for suppression only.

If a paddock is known to have a brome grass problem a good management strategy is to plant a Clearfield wheat variety. If/when brome grass does appear post crop emergence, Midas (MCPA, imazapic & imazapyr—Group I/B) is the best option as it allows a wide application window. A wide window equals a better management strategy for the staggered germination patterns of brome grass.

While there is no current post emergent registrations for the control of brome grass in barley, research is underway. Pending research results, products may become available to manage brome grass in barley in the future.

Brome grass proliferates in no-till crops. This is because the seed does not germinate until burial by the sowing operation which, in conventional systems, burial would occur earlier. Therefore with the increased adoption of no-till across the Wimmera Mallee, it is important to be mindful of the changes in brome grass germination times.

Because post emergent control options are limited, pre-emergent control and crop rotations will remain important in controlling brome grass. BCG sees the management of brome grass as imperative and has positioned its management as a high research priority.

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