

# WEED MANAGEMENT

Herbicide use is becoming increasingly complicated with restrictions on the use of more and more products and a tight water supply. The following articles outline how to cope with these limitations and provide some good information for spraying this season.

When spraying in 2007 remember:

- **Check your water quality**

Basic tests are readily available from most chemical resellers to test pH and water hardness. These simple tests can save thousands of dollars in failed or unsatisfactory spray jobs as a result of using water that is unsuitable for certain products.

- **Use ammonium sulphate**

Ammonium sulphate acts as a water softener removing all of the free positively charged ions in the water that can interfere with some pesticides – especially glyphosate. Both granular ammonium sulphate and liquid products are available and will take the worry out of spraying with hard water when no other water source is available.

- **There are alternatives for 2,4-D Ester 800**

New restrictions mean 2,4-D ester products (such as 2,4-D Ester 800) cannot be used between September 1 and April 30. Low volatile esters (such as LV Ester600 and Estercide Xtra 680) can be substituted where previously 2,4-D ester was used as a spike in glyphosate mixes (except in Chemical Control Areas).

- **Control summer weeds**

Control them early! Summer weeds should be sprayed within 4 weeks of germination while weeds are small, easier to kill and growing actively. There is also usually less problems with dust with earlier spraying. Consider contractors if you can't be there to spray on time.

- **Check the Delta T before spraying – especially in summer**

It's much easier than you think! [www.bom.gov.au/products/IDV60800.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDV60800.shtml) has updated delta T conditions for many locations.

- **Higher rates of Glyphosate may be the answer**

Adjuvants and spikes can add a lot to the cost of summer spraying and knockdowns. Consider spending equivalent dollars, but increase the glyphosate rate and drop the adjuvant.

- **How much are you spending on ryegrass control?**

Addition of expensive spikes to trifluralin such as Dual Gold, Diuron and/or Avadex Xtra can be successful at reducing ryegrass numbers but come at considerable cost. Consider how much money you are investing in these chemical controls. Pasture, fallow and hay crops generally result in better long term control, without the upfront expenses.

- **Did you use any residual herbicides in 2006?**

Carefully go through your records for chemicals applied in 2006 on a paddock by paddock basis. Check recropping intervals, listed on the labels, to ensure your plans for 2007 sowing are safe.

Especially watch out for:

- Group B sulfonylureas (Ally, Glean, Hussar, Atlantis)
- Group B Imidazolinones (Intervix, Midas, On Duty)
- Group C Triazines (Simazine, Atrazine)
- Group I (Lontrel)