

Eyes down for ascochyta

The Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) has issued an ascochyta blight alert following recent rain on emerging chickpea crops.

Rohan Rainbow, GRDC manager crop protection says it is every grower's responsibility to inspect their crops for ascochyta blight and plan control options.

Rohan has urged agronomists to notify Pulse Australia with details of ascochyta outbreaks that include the direction and distance from the nearest town.

Gordon Cumming, Pulse Australia development officer – northern region says no names are needed but reporting the incidences of the disease will allow Pulse Australia to report to industry so growers and advisers have a shared understanding of the disease incidence and levels throughout the season.

"This will help ensure that if weather conditions are favourable for ascochyta development, the disease does not get away from us during this season," Gordon said.

"Plants that emerged prior to and during this rain will now have been exposed to asco infections and many of these crops would not have received their first fungicide spray."

GRDC supports pulse pathology projects run by Mal Ryley, Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries (QPI&F) and Kevin Moore, NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI).

The following checklist has been compiled for growers by Pulse Australia in consultation with Kevin and Mal:

- Get on your hands and knees and have a good look for ascochyta blight.



GRDC is urging growers to check chickpea crops for signs of ascochyta blight.

- Remember it takes five to eight days for lesions to develop on Jimbour and nine to 11 days on Flipper.
- If ascochyta blight is found apply a fungicide prior to the next rainfall event.
- Areas of high disease risk are those districts or farms that had infections last season.
- Early sprays are critical in keeping ascochyta blight in the lower canopy and away from the pods come spring.
- Keep in mind the need to apply the first

fungicide prior to the first post emergence rain event, or three weeks after emergence or at the three branch stage of development (whichever occurs first).

To report ascochyta blight outbreaks, contact Gordon Cumming, Pulse Australia on 0408 923 474 or pulse.gordon@bigpond.com. To download the GRDC Chickpea Disease Fact Sheet, visit www.grdc.com.au/uploads/documents/GRDC_FS_chickpea.pdf.

Additional information on disease identification and management strategies can be found at www.pulseaus.com.au

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