

Hybrid canola hits new heights

Australian growers will be the first in the world to benefit from a canola breeding breakthrough, with the introduction of hybrid triazine tolerant canola seed next season.

The advanced variety, CB Jardee HT canola, combines triazine herbicide tolerance with the benefits of hybrid vigour for higher yields and quality.

The technology was developed by Australian-based canola specialists, Canola Breeders.

Jardee HT is a mid-season hybrid, suited to medium to high rainfall regions. It is one of three triazine tolerant hybrid varieties now available from Canola Breeders.

A limited quantity of Jardee HT canola was sown this season in both Victoria and southern New South Wales.

Display crops were established at Southern Farming Systems' Inverleigh and Dunkeld trial sites in Victoria. Rohan Wardle, Research and Extension Agronomist for SFS, said Jardee HT would be of interest to many canola growers if it continued to deliver excellent yield results.

Jardee HT topped the National Variety Trials yield trial at Hamilton in 2008, with 3.53 tonnes per hectare.

Rohan said Jardee HT was sown at Inverleigh on May 25 this year at 4 kg hectare with 100 kg per hectare of MAP.

"For a late sown crop, I am pretty rapt with its performance," Rohan said.

Visitors to the SFS field day at Inverleigh in October were able to see the crop in its prime, growing over a few hectares in the middle of the trial site.

"I'm expecting the Inverleigh crop to yield around two tonnes a hectare, which

is better than I would generally expect for a late sown TT variety," he said.

Inverleigh district grower, Murray Witcombe, sowed half of one of his canola paddocks with Jardee HT and half with a conventional triazine tolerant variety this year, to assess the new variety.

"The vigour of Jardee was noticeably better, and it really grew out well after the first four weeks," Murray said.

He regularly uses triazine tolerant varieties in paddocks with problem weeds, such as wild radish.

He said his canola had grown well through the season, but was in need of a good rainfall to finish pod-filling.

Murray's adviser at Landmark in Bannockburn, Ashley Perkins, sees strong potential for Jardee HT among southern Victorian growers.

"The way growers are going, they're looking for hybrids to give them early seedling vigour and higher yields – but they still need TT varieties to control weed pressures," Ashley said.

"By combining triazine tolerance with hybrid vigour, the end result is a variety that a lot of growers will be interested in."

NSW trial

A test strip of Jardee HT was sown south west of Boorowa, NSW on Michael and Mark Carmody's farm 'Wharoa'.

The Carmody's grow around 400 hectares of canola and wheat each year, with help from Tom Corkhill from Boorowa Pastoral Supplies.

Jardee HT was sown in a comparison strip between Tawriffic and Summit at the start of June, and was quick to establish.

"The Jardee HT jumped away well after

sowing and cabbaged up quickly to give a good ground cover," Tom said. "It also matured earlier and finished flowering earlier.

"Now we're just waiting to compare its yield and oil content against the other varieties."

Tom said windrowing was planned for late November.

"We've been lucky with the season, with no major disease problems and only some minor frost damage in mid-October," he said.

Triazine tolerant varieties had regularly been used on the farm to help control weed issues, which were now becoming more manageable.

David Leah, Territory Manager for Canola Breeders, based in Wagga Wagga, said Jardee HT was included in all of the National Variety Trial (NVT) sites for canola in 2009.

"Most of the 2009 trials were sown within the first two weeks of May, and despite the early cut out of the season and frost issues in some regions, the crops have generally been able to develop and show their potential," he said.

Results from the National Variety Trials will be available early in 2010.

"Jardee HT is an exciting opportunity for canola growers looking to maximise yields in medium to higher rainfall regions such as Cowra, Young, Wagga Wagga and Albury," he said.

"It is best sown by the third week of May with an optimum population of 20 to 35 plants per square metre. You need to check the seed weight prior to planting to ensure a correct planting rate.

For more information visit www.canolabreeders.com.au.



Inverleigh farmer Murray Witcombe sowed the new Jardee HT alongside a conventional TT canola variety and was impressed with Jardee's early vigour.



Tom Corkhill from Boorowa Pastoral Supplies shows the new hybrid triazine tolerant canola, Jardee HT, grown in a test strip south west of Boorowa, NSW.