

Get the best out of weed control in beet

According to John Nix 2016 the average money spent on agrochemicals for sugar beet is £232/ha and, of that, £160/ha is spent on herbicides (see graph below). The cost of herbicide programmes in 2015 UPL annual broad-leaved weed trials in sugar beet ranged from just over £100/ha to just under £160/ha, with all treatments providing an acceptable level of weed control, but the number of passes with the sprayer varied from two to four. This, says UPL's technical support manager UK & Ireland, Pamela Chambers (right), illustrates the importance of ensuring the best programme is used for each field, and product, rates and timings are carefully considered.



"There is comfort in knowing that money spent on herbicides in a beet crop is going to pay for itself in fields where, even when the weed burden is low, there is still a positive return," she highlights.

"The use of pre-emergence

herbicides is often debated," continues Ms Chambers. "Where black-grass is expected then ethofumesate (as in Efeckt or Ethosat 500) and metamitron (Bettix Flo or Goltix) should be used pre-emergence. In other situations a pre-em spray can be useful where weeds such as knot-grass are expected. Where drilling is very early and crop and weed growth can be slow, the use of a pre-em spray can provide useful flexibility in the timing of the first post-em sprays," she explains.

According to Pamela Chambers, the number of restrictions and label requirements that need to be considered when planning beet herbicide programmes continue to become more complicated. A few to be aware of are listed below:

- Check chloridazon labels as most now only have approval for pre-emergence use. The maximum total dose of 2.6kg/ha of chloridazon may only be applied every third year on the same field.
- Products may consist of the same active ingredient but they can

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have different label restrictions, or even different crop approvals. Products

containing ethofumesate are a good example as the maximum individual rate/ha permitted at different timings differ significantly and crops listed on the label vary.

- Check MAPP numbers eg Avadex (12109) has a final use date of 31-12-2016 on beet crops. The new Avadex (16998) currently does not have an approval for use on these crops.
- When using complicated 'Broadacre' tank mixes check for manufacture support – UPL Europe and other manufacturers provide comprehensive guides. Support tends to be by product name as formulations can differ in their safety and efficacy.
- A maximum permitted total dose of 1.0kg/ha of ethofumesate over a three-year period on the same field must be adhered to. Don't forget that ethofumesate has approval for use in grassland (seed crops) and from this autumn winter wheat as well.
- Products containing clopyralid such as Dow Shield 400 and Vivendi 200 must be applied before the end of June.



energy beet, but the same does not apply for fodder beet. Fodder beet as a crop must appear on the product label or the product needs to be covered by an Extension of Authorisation for Minor Use (EAMU). "Sometimes forgotten is the fact that Venzar Flo (MAPP 06907) can be used on fodder beet both pre- and post-emergence. Using Venzar Flo pre-emergence has a full label approval but post-emergence use requires a copy of the EAMU 1765/11 that can be downloaded from the CRD website (secure.pesticides.gov.uk).

"UPL Europe Ltd will support a Broadacre approach on fodder beet as from the 1st true leaf 1cm stage of the crop," she adds.

This consists of two robust programmes about 14 days apart, for example:

desmedipham + phenmedipham + ethofumesate (eg Betasana Trio) + lenacil (Venzar Flo) + triflusaluron-methyl (eg Shiro or Debut)

OR

desmedipham + phenmedipham + ethofumesate (eg Betasana Trio) + metamitron (eg Bettix Flo or Goltix) + triflusaluron-methyl (eg Shiro or Debut)

"The use of a pre-emergence herbicide mix based around metamitron followed by a two-spray Broadacre approach as shown above is often a cost effective option for fodder beet and energy beet growers," Ms Chambers concludes.

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Fodder and energy beet

Although the fundamentals are the same for weed control in all beet crops there are a few important points to consider, suggests Ms Chambers. "All herbicides that have an approval for use on sugar beet can be used on

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