Update: September 2021
Location: Finniss, South Australia

Strathalbyn trial now virtually unmissable!

Good conditions for winter crops are equally encouraging for weeds and fungal diseases, so the 2021 growing season has really put crop protection products to the test.

Local growers and agronomists who've had the chance to visit BASF's Innovation Site – run by AgXtra – at Finniss, near Strathalbyn in South Australia this season have seen what BASF Area Sales Manager Garry Arbon describes as "some really nice differences" between the plots with plenty of excellent results and key learnings.

One of the big successes at the site has been the demonstration of the LibertyLink® system for canola. BASF are releasing a LibertyLink and Triazine Tolerant hybrid variety in 2022 – InVigor® LT 4530P – and are also trialing the LibertyLink and TruFlex® variety scheduled for release in 2023. Both varieties combine the PodGuard® shatter-resistance trait with their two herbicide tolerances.

With resistance to glyphosate and clethodim now widespread, the option of using Liberty® Herbicide in the canola phase of the rotation gives growers an important extra mode of action to control annual ryegrass and other key weeds. Liberty is a contact herbicide rather than systemic, so good control relies on getting thorough spray coverage under favourable conditions. "Liberty has worked exceptionally well," Garry Arbon says. "It shows up well if you're tackling the ryegrass before it gets too big and the canola starts cabbaging up and shading the weeds."

It's not just Liberty that's been effective in Garry's assessment: "All the ryegrass treatments at the site are looking really good."

Among the other ryegrass herbicides in the trials, Luximax® has maintained excellent crop safety and ryegrass control, while new Voraxor® has been a stand-out on broadleaf weeds.

"The cereal crops were re-sown into good moisture mid-July," Garry says. "They were originally sown too shallow in May to suit our program. When they were re-sown again at a healthy 3cm depth, conditions were ideal for crop emergence and weed germination and it stayed very wet until early September. There's a fair bit of wild radish and it's really showing the strength of Voraxor as a pre-emergent on both wild radish and capeweed."

The wet conditions presented a challenge for the fungicide treatments, and at one stage *septoria tritici* was getting away in the wheat. "We were a bit late getting the Opera® out, which is a 'real world' test," says Garry. "You have the best intentions, but just don't get to spray in time." As things turned out, that temporary loss of control set up a great demonstration of what BASF's latest foliar fungicide can do: "It highlighted how well new Revystar® pulled the septoria up."

The good news is that everyone involved in broadacre cropping can make their own comparisons between the plots at Strathalbyn – and BASF's other Innovation Sites around the country – online. Just go to **crop-solutions.basf.com.au/innovationsites** or type 'BASF Strathalbyn' into your search engine.

The online coverage of BASF's innovation sites gives anyone the opportunity to see how certain products are performing in-field compared to other industry standards.

"There's still no real substitute for being on the spot to see what's happening first-hand," BASF's Technical Services Manager Phil Hoult explains. "In the long term, though, we have some very ambitious plans to increase the digital tools we'll be offering agronomists and growers to help them interpret what's happening in the paddock. Our team here in Australia is constantly adapting the results of the company's global research to benefit local farmers and we're currently working towards launching some new smartphone technologies that can both identify crop impacts and potential threats and suggest strategies for managing them."

For more information or to visit BASF's Innovation Sites visit: https://crop-solutions.basf.com.au/innovation-sites