

4Farmers commits \$10,000 to help save 2,4-D Ester

THE fate of 2,4-D High Volatile Esters (HVE) remains unknown, with the Canberra-based Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) seemingly determined to remove it from the market because of perceived problems on the East coast.

In a strange move, the APVMA has said it will again allow its summer use in WA under a permit system, but this time \$100,000 must be provided to monitor its performance under local conditions.

The CBH Group has applied for the permit and it is expecting that the 20 companies that have the product registered could ensure its use by contributing \$5000 each towards the sum needed to fund the research.

"If the APVMA wants to take the chemical off the market then it should pay for the research" was the comment from Phil Patterson, 4Farmers Chairman, a view that is almost certainly shared by WA farmers.

"Removing the HVE ester from the market will add an extra \$1/ha using other alternatives" said Phil Patterson, "an unnecessary impost on the farmers, even though the bureaucrats tend not to consider such things."

Unfortunately 13 of the registrants have not bothered to throw their support behind the initiative, which could mean more cost for the 7 companies that have committed. Alternatively the government could put the extra money in. Or another alternative is if the \$100,000 could be pro-rated against company sales, particularly NuFarm who it's reported to control over 85% of this market.

The \$10,000 commitment is well in excess of 4Farmers profit on the product, so it is virtually a donation 4Farmers is making to the industry. However this is exactly the sort of thing 4Farmers is about, helping farmers in what we think is a worthwhile cause."



4Farmers Chairman, Phil Patterson, is not impressed with industry being called on to fund government research.

Protecting crops from fungal diseases

Regardless of the results of the current cropping season, it is important to give the 2008 crop the best possible start and that includes taking precautions against fungal diseases.

4Farmers agronomist, Terry Piper, emphasised the need to start with good seed, adding that "those fortunate enough to be able to retain seed should ensure it comes from a good paddock – no small or pinched grain for sowing.

"Don't save seed from a paddock where smut infected seeds are evident" he continued, "as the more infected seeds there are present, the harder it is to control with pickle, but it will clean up low levels of infection and protect against insects

while in storage."

4Farmers can supply Triadimenol 150 and Tebuconazole 25 at competitive prices and both will control smut and bunt, while Triadimenol 150 can also give short term protection to seedlings against wheat stripe rust and barley mildew and scald at its higher rate.

To cover both extremes, Terry advises those who plan to treat their fertiliser with a fungicide that seed treatment is not necessary, while for those whose budget is really stretched, "always pickle the seed that will be planted to produce the next year's seed, as that will reduce the chance of smuts building up in your seed."

4Farmers giving money to farmers

WITH the end of the year and season nearly upon us, 4Farmers has announced its two-part "farmer rewards" programme, starting with the early order promotion that provides great specials for those who order early.

Buying early helps the company spread its orders and deliveries, so it then passes on some of the savings from this venture, giving farmers a practical demonstration of why the company motto is "for farmers."

As a parallel promotion, 4Farmers has also announced its the trading rebate scheme. Whereby the company shows its appreciation by rebating in the form of a trading voucher, some of the monies received from its clients, which over the last few years has averaged 3%.

A normal system for a cooperative, but pretty unique for a private company. However 4Farmers is a pretty unique company.

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