

Trial sites highlight Overwatch performance in lead-up to release

Trials sites throughout Australia are demonstrating the strong performance of Overwatch[®] herbicide, from FMC, in the year prior to its full commercial release.

Overwatch herbicide is a pre-emergent option for the control of Annual ryegrass and a wide range of other grassy and broadleaf weeds in wheat, barley and canola.

It has been extensively trialled over many years and under a wide range of soil types and seasonal conditions and has recently gained full registration with the APVMA.

Good supplies of Overwatch herbicide will be available for the 2021 winter crop season with the product being manufactured in Australia, at FMC's Wyong plant, in New South Wales.

FMC Technical Extension Specialist, Mark Yerbury, said trials of Overwatch throughout Australia were looking excellent.

He said FMC had demonstrated the herbicide at the Farmlink site at Temora, in the Riverina area of New South Wales over the past two seasons.

"At this site we have canola, wheat and barley plots with Overwatch with both tank mixes and standalone treatments," he said.

"The demonstration site is to show agronomists and growers through, so they see the weed control and learn more about how the product works."

"Treatments that we have at the tech site here are Overwatch by itself, at 1.25 litres per hectare, which is the standard use rate, across all three crop types.

"We also have it at two times the label rate to demonstrate the crop safety in areas where there might be an overlap from spraying," Mr Yerbury said.

"We're also looking at mixing and rotating tank mix partners to have different modes of actions to expand your weed control options and help control resistant grasses."

Overwatch is registered as a pre-emergent herbicide in wheat, barley and canola for the control of Annual ryegrass, Bifora, Hogweed / Wireweed, Lesser Loosestrife, Silvergrass and Sowthistle.

Suppression of Barley grass, Bedstraw, Brome grass, Capeweed, Phalaris, Prickly lettuce, Wild oat and Wild radish is also on the label.

"Overwatch herbicide is unique in the way that it works on ryegrass plants," Mr Yerbury said. "The plants will actually germinate, come out of the ground and then turn bright pink before they desiccate. It is effectively starving the plant because they aren't able to photosynthesize."

The herbicide is in the Group Q category so it will be an important tool with a unique mode of action for herbicide resistance management.

Mr Yerbury said they were able to take small groups through the trial sites across the country but were also looking at different options to share information with farmers and agronomists throughout the season.

“We are photographing and videoing our key trial locations and will use the information as part of a virtual tour for each site,” he said.

“This will provide the viewer with an excellent perspective and include some pegged areas of interest and the difference in treatments across the weeks and months.”

“At the Temora site there are pegs on specific weeds early in the season and viewers will be able to have a side-by-side look at that exact weed later in the season.”

The virtual tour will be available in August on the overwatchherbicide.com.au website.

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Photo caption

Mark Yerbury and Hugh Palmer, of FMC, with Elders agronomists at the Temora, NSW Overwatch site early in the season.