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Glyphosate-resistant sowthistle found at Gunnedah

The world's first case of glyphosate-resistant sowthistle has been found at Gunnedah in the Upper Namoi, providing a stark reminder to growers that vigilance is needed in integrated weed control.

The discovery is a real concern to farmers throughout NSW and southern QLD, due to the capacity of sowthistle to spread via wind-borne seed. It, like fleabane, is likely to spread rapidly due to this wind-borne nature.

It is a stark reminder that glyphosate resistance is a continuing problem and vigilance is paramount in managing weeds, with follow up inspections and the removal of survivors critical.

Concerned growers are encouraged to have sowthistle samples tested for glyphosate and Group B resistance. If you suspect glyphosate-resistant sowthistle on your property, phone Tony Cook at Tamworth (0447 651 607) or Graham Charles at ACRI Narrabri (02 6799 1524). For more information on managing glyphosate resistance, visit this website: www.glyphosateresistance.org.au.

As the end of the growing season fast approaches, growers are reminded of the importance of effective post-harvest management of cotton crop residues.

How to successfully manage sowthistle:

- Stop all seed set
- Get sowthistle on your property tested for glyphosate and Group B resistance
- Spray weeds when rosettes are no bigger than the top of a drink can. This may mean spraying more often
- Use full label rates when sowthistle is present and use appropriate water volumes for the herbicide
- Have spray rigs properly calibrated to deliver the maximum amount of the herbicide to the weeds
- 'Double knock' with another mode of action or tillage
- Use other modes of action such as Group L, I, L+Q
- Use targeted shallow cultivation if needed
- Control large survivors with a Weedseeker or Weed-it sprayer
- Control sowthistle and other weeds around fences, buildings, roads and irrigation channels.

Helping growers manage changes to weed control practices

Glyphosate tolerant and resistant weeds are now a reality in the cotton farming system, which is why CRDC has begun a project to provide growers and agronomists with more support in making changes to weed control practices, through the development of an industry-wide Herbicide Resistance Management Strategy (HRMS).

Growers face the challenge of controlling weeds while also managing significant costs of production – which means growers and consultants are often faced with difficult trade offs between maintaining profitability in the present, and the cost efficiency of increasingly difficult weed situations in the future.

Feedback from growers, consultants and researchers has indicated that what is needed is a way to navigate the vast amount of information already available about weed management options, and help identify those that offer the greatest value in specific situations.

As a result, CRDC is supporting a project being undertaken by Annabelle Guest, a Narrabri-based consultant, who is working with cotton industry weeds researchers to draft a cotton industry HRMS, demonstrating the principals underpinning sustainable weed management. As the project progresses, Annabelle will work with growers via regional Cotton Grower Associations to introduce the Cotton HRMS. It will then go to the Cotton Australia TMS Committee for industry endorsement.

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