



Supported by



Thursday 9 December 2010

No. 62

FELICITY PRITCHARD
Pritchard Agricultural Consulting and Extension
Grains Innovation Park
110 Natimuk Road, Horsham, Vic 3401
Ph: (03) 5382 4396 or 0427 600 228

OILSEEDS NEWS - MEDIA RELEASES

MONITOR GRAIN MOISTURE, ESPECIALLY CANOLA

Croppers in eastern Australia are urged to measure, monitor and check as they face the challenging job of getting this year’s harvest completed.



BE PREPARED: Moisture content of grain will need to be monitored closely this harvest, especially canola. PHOTO: Felicity Pritchard.

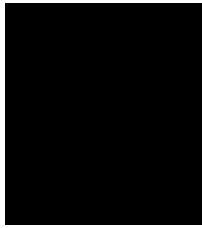
Peter Botta, who works on a Grains Research and Development Corporation grains storage extension project, says it is vital to know grain moisture levels at harvest - particularly for canola.

Mr Botta, from PCB Consulting, said as a rule cereal grain entering on-farm storage should have a maximum 12 per cent moisture. For canola, it is eight per

cent.

“Over the past decade, people have probably often harvested cereals at nine to 10 per cent moisture but this year growers face the prospect of harvesting at 12 per cent and some grain higher than 12 per cent.

“This means that growers storing grain on farm will need to measure moisture levels and then monitor and check the grain regularly,” he said.



Supported by



Canola harvested above eight per cent moisture should be dried as soon as possible but specialist advice should be sought beforehand.

The delivery standard for canola is a maximum of eight per cent moisture. Canola should be stored at less than seven per cent moisture below 20 degrees Celsius, a lower temperature than cereals. It also should be aerated to preserve quality and avoid insect infestations.

“Grain stored at too high a moisture level can be affected by mould and fungal growth and will be at a higher risk of insect attack,” said Mr Botta.

Canola, in particular, is at risk of spontaneous combustion and sprouting as well as lower quality due to the formation of free fatty acids in the oil under warm temperatures.

“The big thing is you don’t want high moisture content and high temperatures,” he said.

The higher the oil content of canola, the lower the moisture content and temperature required to be safe. Any canola stored on-farm will need to be regularly checked.

“Aerated silos will help with these issues but may not provide be the total solution, especially in humid conditions.”

Mr Botta said once the relative humidity of the outside air is above 80 per cent, aeration does not bring down grain moisture levels – you are actually pumping moisture back into the grain.

“It's important not to expect aeration to dry grain to any great degree, typical aeration on-farm is for cooling; aeration drying is a whole different practise. If growers are considering this, it is important they seek correct advice and use equipment which can do the job.

“And while many New South Wales and Queensland farmers use driers to bring grain moisture levels down, there are fewer of these in Victoria and quick access to them is not guaranteed,” Mr Botta said.



Supported by



Victorian Department of Primary Industries (DPI) Grains Project Manager Chris Sounness said rains had created major delays in what was shaping up as a bumper harvest.

“For many croppers the latest rain could not have come at a worse time.

“With many people choosing to market more grain themselves, the way they store this year’s production on farm will be critical,” Mr Sounness said.

For more information on grain storage, visit <http://www.storedgrain.com.au>

Media enquiries, Peter Botta: 0417 501 890.

Photo: IMG_0481.jpg

Caption: “BE PREPARED: Moisture content of grain will need to be monitored closely this harvest, especially canola. PHOTO: Felicity Pritchard.”

| | |
|--|--|
| Metadata | |
| Project codes | AOF00009, DAQ00158 |
| Researcher or researchers’ names | Felicity Pritchard, Nick Goddard, Peter Botta. |
| Keywords (6 or more, separated by comma) | Canola, monitor, measure, moisture, cereals, grain, seed, oil, storage, aeration, drying, spontaneous combustion, mould, free fatty acids, insects, sprouted grain, quality, standards, Australia, eastern Australia, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Australian Oilseeds Federation, GRDC, PCB Consulting, Better Break Crops, moisture, segregation, stockfeed, deliveries, weather damage, harvest. |
