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OILSEEDS NEWS

2005 CANOLA DISEASE CARRYOVER WARNING

Growers in southern New South Wales this year will need to be extra careful when choosing where to sow canola this season and selecting varieties according to latest research. Unlike normal seasons, canola stubble from two seasons ago presents a potential disease problem.

Wagga Wagga-based canola pathologist, Tamrika Hind-Lanoiselet said that the drought in the region in 2006 followed by a fairly dry summer have delayed the ripening of the fungal spores responsible for the disease, blackleg, developing on stubble.

Canola growers in the region are advised to select disease resistant



CARRYOVER: Stubble from 2005 canola crops can pose a bigger disease threat than the 2006 crop stubble due to the drought.

varieties and ensure their crops are sown no closer than 500 metres from 2005 and 2006 canola paddocks, to prevent potential blackleg infection.

Dr Hind-Lanoiselet, of the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries, said blackleg spores from the 2005 crop were close to maturity, whereas those on last year's stubble were still immature and did not pose a threat to this year's canola.

“Moisture is the main factor affecting the ripening of blackleg spores. Because of the drought, the spores on the 2005 stubble has by-passed a season,” she said.



BLACKLEG RISK: Canola growers in Southern NSW need to take extra care this year to isolate canola crops from two year old stubble.

This warning is in contrast with recommendations following a normal season, which encourages growers to sow canola no less than 500 metres from last year's canola stubble. Disease resistant varieties are also critical in managing blackleg, and fungicides can be used in high risk situations.

Dr Hind-Lanoiselet said that computer simulation models for Wagga Wagga suggest the release of spores from stubble of canola grown last year will begin to occur on 15 June. The models have been developed by Dr. Moin Salam of the Western Australian Department of Agriculture and Food.

She warned that fungicide seed dressings only provide protection for about four weeks from sowing, and this may not be sufficient for less disease-resistant varieties sown before the fourth week of May.

Dr Hind-Lanoiselet intends to undertake an economic analysis of research data to determine if a foliar fungicide spray will be cost effective this season in southern New South Wales.

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