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OILSEEDS NEWS

RESEARCH TO KEEP CANOLA ONE STEP AHEAD OF BLACKLEG

A canola researcher hopes to come up with new strategies for managing the potentially devastating disease, blackleg in the long-term.



DURABLE: Wimmera grower, Rolf Hedt, is sowing a canola trial to prevent canola disease resistance breaking down again.

varieties with different genetic sources of blackleg resistance, individual strains of the blackleg fungus should not build up to extreme levels – potentially putting the entire canola industry at risk.

Canola pathologist, Steve Marcroft, is undertaking the research in the Wimmera to prevent a repeat of the 2003 season when the disease decimated canola crops in South Australia, following the continued use of certain popular varieties that allowed a single strain of the disease-causing fungus to overcome the blackleg resistance in those varieties.

Dr Marcroft believes that if farmers can rotate canola

The “blackleg resistance durability” trials, being undertaken through the Birchip Cropping Group and the Wallup Topcrop Group at Rolf Hedt’s property at Kalkee, north of Horsham, were sown yesterday.

Mr Hedt’s property was chosen for the three hectare trial as he has not grown canola since 1993.

He said he was keen to be involved to learn more about canola varieties in an era of rapid change within the industry.

“If it gets wet again, I want to be up-to-date with the latest information on canola,” he said.

Mr Hedt said that his property already received 208 millimetres (mm) of rain this year, compared with only 179 mm for the entire year in 2006.

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