

## **BBRO Advisory Bulletin No 4 - 11th April 2016**

### **Drilling update**

Progress is steady at best with April showers continuing to frustrate progress. The difficult seedbeds we have referred to before are a result of very little winter weathering, coupled with ongoing wet conditions. If warmer winters are to become a feature of our climate, then perhaps we need to give more thought to how we leave stronger soils over the winter period. It is really noticeable that those stronger soils which were pressed, or ploughed with a furrow cracker last autumn have had more tilth to them this spring. Your thoughts on this would be welcome!

### **Emergence**

Plants are emerging well from earlier drilled fields and the showery weather has meant that these crops have not wanted for moisture and emergence at this stage seems to be fairly uniform. It will be interesting to see how the later drilled crops emerge where seed to soil contact is perhaps not as good. Second nitrogen applications are underway and thoughts will be turning to weed control programmes very shortly.

### **Pests**

Little to report so far and long may that continue. Rolling seems to be helping hold off mouse damage on many fields and it is worth placing some slug traps on some of the later drilled heavy land fields to monitor for their presence. Continued showers will assist the movement of slugs but will also help plants grow away from damage. Obviously, only apply slug pellets where damage is occurring and follow the manufacturer's directions.

### **2016 Powdery mildew forecast**

Although the overall winter period has been mild, 33 ground frosts were recorded in February and March (the key period for the forecast) and consequently 29.6% of the national crop is predicted to be infected with the disease by the end of August. This is the same number of ground frosts as recorded in 2012, but due to a combination of unfavourable weather in August and the use of timely fungicide applications powdery mildew has not been a major concern to most growers for the last five years. In 2016 the BBRO will undertake fungicide trials in Norfolk and Lincolnshire and we will keep you

informed of disease developments as the season progresses, but, timely on-farm hygiene will help to reduce any potential threats from the foliar diseases.

***Caution:** this information is based on results of experiments and experience but cannot constitute a recommendation.*

**BASIS Points**

Two BASIS points in total (not per bulletin) have been allocated for the period between 01/06/15 and 31/05/16 reference CP/43823/1516/g. To claim these points please email [michele@basis-reg.co.uk](mailto:michele@basis-reg.co.uk)



[www.bbro.co.uk](http://www.bbro.co.uk)